HIGH SCHOOL LEADERS' PERCEPTIONS ON DISPROPORTIONALITY IN SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AMONG AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS

A Dissertation

by

ILENE BROWN HARPER

Submitted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Chair of Committee,	Beverly J. Irby
Committee Members,	Gwendolyn Webb-Hasan
	Charles Ridley
	Khalil Dirani
Head of Department,	Mario Torres

December 2017

Major Subject: Educational Administration

ABSTRACT

National trends indicate that systemic disparities in school discipline are evident by race. Students of color, for instance, are more likely than White students to be suspended from school. School-level policies and practices, as well as conditions in the community contribute to the disparate impact of school discipline among African-American students. In Texas, African-American students are disproportionately more likely to be removed from the classroom for disciplinary reasons. While the federal government has provided guidance on how positive discipline policies can help create safer learning environments without relying heavily on suspensions and expulsions, the problem is very complex in that there are many factors working against African-American students.

With the need for discipline to be directly aligned with instructional strategies and classroom expectations, there is a demand for more research-based practices to address student behaviors from a culturally relevant perspective. Furthermore, acknowledging that more than 40 years of research exist documenting the problem, there is very limited qualitative research on effective practices. Through this phenomenological study, I provide insight to the school leaders' perceptions of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Culturally Responsive Instructional Leadership (CRIL) in response to disproportionality in school discipline of African-American students. Likewise, a seven-step model for implementing PBIS with CRIL to address disproportionality in school discipline of African-American students is presented for practitioners.

DEDICATION

First and foremost, I dedicate my dissertation to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. It was through Christ that I was able to stay the course and complete this study so I give Him the Honor and Glory. Second, I dedicate my dissertation to my husband, Eric, for the unconditional love and support you provided to me during my program study. Likewise, my children, LaTarsha, Eric Jr. and Erica have been my backbone and support system. I often made many last minute changes to accommodate my workload for my degree program and their support demonstrates unconditional love. Third, I would like to dedicate my dissertation to my mother, Imogene Loyd, and siblings, Terrance, Jackie, Wendy, and Cornelius for always encouraging me to go after my dreams. Fourth, I dedicate my dissertation to the First Mount Carmel Baptist Church family for the continuous prayers and encouragement along the way. Finally, I dedicate my dissertation to my family members and close friends who have been a source of support and encouragement when I needed it to keep going.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my committee chair, Dr. Beverly Irby, and my committee members, Dr. Gwen Webb-Hasan, Dr. Charles Ridley, and Dr. Khalil Dirani for their guidance and support throughout the course of this research. I was very fortunate to have a team with expert experience across different disciplines. I appreciate the time and work you invested in me.

Dr. Irby, thank you for believing in me and assisting me with getting to the core of what I desired from my research study. You were very patient and committed to seeing me through this endeavor. Your unwavering support and high degree of attention to the details of my study assisted me with getting prepared for the Preliminary Examination. Providing the opportunity for me to serve as an assistant in your Research Proposal class was just what I needed to sharpen my skills as a researcher and get my proposal prepared for submission. We are very fortunate to have someone with your passion and expertise serving in a vital role at Texas A&M University.

Dr. Webb-Hasan, words alone will not describe the support and inspiration you have been to me throughout my degree program. I had the unique opportunity to meet you before I even thought about pursuing a Ph.D. I knew at that moment in 2008, I wanted to contribute to the field in that same way. While I did not act upon the dream until 2013, your passion, and expertise in culturally responsive education resonated me. Thank you for planting the seed and inspiring me to look beyond what I was currently doing in the field of education.

Dr. Ridley, I was intrigued by your wealth of knowledge and professionalism. Thank you for accepting my participation with the Counseling Psychology cohort class. I learned some very important information that I was able to immediately utilize in the role I served at the time. I greatly appreciate you for providing guidance with my degree program and career interests.

Dr. Dirani, I am very grateful that you accepted my invitation to serve on my committee. While I did not have the opportunity to take a course with you, I have thoroughly enjoyed receiving your feedback and assistance with my study. Your expertise and willingness to assist me are greatly appreciated.

Thanks also go to my friends and colleagues and the department faculty and staff for making my time at Texas A&M University a great experience. I especially want to thank Dr. Janice Little who graciously reviewed and provided feedback on numerous papers throughout my journey. Thanks for your willingness and positive perspectives on many occasions. I also want to extend my gratitude to Joyce Nelson for being a great resource and support system throughout my degree program.

CONTRIBUTORS AND FUNDING SOURCES

This work was supervised by a dissertation committee consisting of Professor Beverly Irby, Chair, and Professor Gwendolyn Webb-Hasan, Professor Khalil Dirani of the Department of Educational Administration and Human Resource Development and Professor Charles Ridley of the Department of Educational Psychology.

All work for the dissertation was completed by the student, under the advisement of Professor Beverly Irby of the Department of Educational Administration and Human Resource Development.

There are no outside funding contributions to acknowledge related to the research and compilation of this document.

NOMENCLATURE

AA	African American
CRIL	Culturally Responsive Instructional Leadership
DAEP	District Alternative Education Placement
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
OCR	Office of Civil Rights
PBIS	Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
NASP	National Association of School Psychologists
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs
OSS	Out-of-school suspensions
TEA	Texas Education Agency

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

National trends indicate that discipline is a widespread concern in schools. Many view the rise in suspension rates as a necessary response to the increasing school violence and need to maintain order in a safe environment (Skiba, 2013); however, current data contradicts this belief (U. S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2011; Skiba, 2013). With the emphasis on discipline being directly aligned with instructional strategies and classroom expectations, there is a need for more research-based practices to address student behaviors. The most common requests for assistance from teachers are related to student behavioral and classroom management issues (Sugai, Horner, Algozzine, Barrett, Lewis, Anderson & Simonsen, 2010). According to Former U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, positive discipline policies can help create safer learning environments without relying heavily on suspensions and expulsions (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Creating and maintaining a learning environment that prepares all students for college, careers, and civic life can be challenging for educators when discipline is a concern. The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) school data revealed that students of color are disciplined at higher rates than their peers, beginning in preschool and extending through high school (U.S. Department of Education). African-American students are more likely to receive disciplinary actions than other student groups (U.S. Department of Education).

In Texas, a longitudinal study of nearly one million students showed that African Americans, Latinos, and students with educational disabilities were disproportionately

more likely to be removed from the classroom for disciplinary reasons (Fabelo, Thompson, Plotkin, Carmichael, Marchbanks, & Booth, 2011). Students who were suspended and or expelled, particularly those who were repeatedly disciplined, were more likely to be held back a grade or to drop out than were students not involved in the disciplinary system (Fabelo et al.). When a student was suspended or expelled, his or her likelihood of being involved in the juvenile justice system the subsequent year increased significantly (Fabelo). Surprisingly, only 3% of the disciplinary actions were for conduct for which state law mandates suspensions and expulsions; the remainder of disciplinary actions were made at the discretion of school officials, primarily in response to violations of local schools' conduct codes (Fabelo). Majority African-American and Hispanic student populations with higher rates of limited English speakers and higher rates of students on free and reduced lunch are more likely to experience inequity with school resources (Milner, 2014). Recognizing that the systemic disparities are evident by race, Culturally Responsive Instructional Leadership (CRIL) is paramount for all students to receive a fair and substantial learning experience. CRIL promotes quality educational opportunities for all students at high levels through knowing, valuing, and utilizing students' cultural backgrounds, languages, and learning styles to provide a quality learning experience (Terrell & Lindsey, 2009).

Problem Statement

Addressing disproportionality in out-of-school suspensions (OSS) and expulsions of African-American students in Texas high schools should include an effective Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework with a CRIL component

(Skiba, Arrendondo, & Rausch, 2014; Boneshefski & Runge, 2014; Vincent, Randall, Cartledge, Tobin, & Swain-Bradway, 2011). According to the OCR 2011-12 school data, students of color are more likely than White students to be suspended from school, have less access to rigorous math and science classes, and be taught by less experienced and lower paid teachers (Rich, 2014). Nationwide, the OCR data indicated that youths of color and youths with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by suspensions and expulsions (Rich). The 2011-12 school data showed that African-American students are suspended and expelled at three times the rate of White students and Latino students are twice as likely (U. S. Department of Education, 2014). The OCR 2013-14 school data indicated that the discipline gap is widening (U. S. Department of Education, 2016). African Americans were 3.8 times as likely to receive one or more OSS and 1.9 times as likely to be expelled from school without educational services as White students (U. S. Department of Education).

Furthermore, students who are suspended or expelled from school may be unsupervised during daytime hours and cannot benefit from great teaching, positive peer interactions, and adult mentorship offered in class and school (U. S. Department of Education, 2014). The publishing of these two reports as well as the news media drawing attention to the issue of equity in school discipline has created a national sense of urgency to change this long-standing phenomenon. The disparate impact of OSS and expulsions on African-American students beget the need for more research-based strategies to positively intervene and reduce the exclusionary discipline (Losen & Gillespie, 2012; Martin, 2012; Skiba, et al., 2014; U.S. Department of Education, 2014).

Importance of the Study

Noting that federal actions are in place to address disproportionality in school discipline, there is much to do to equalize educational services in schools. The OCR requires school districts to have an OCR coordinator and collect a variety of information including school enrollment, educational programs and services data (Losen & Gillespie, 2012; Skiba, Ekces, & Brown, 2010; U.S. Department of Education, 2014). The purpose of the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) is for the U.S. Department of Education to obtain data on public school districts to provide equal educational opportunity and enforce civil rights statues for which it is responsible (Losen & Gillespie; Skiba et al.; U.S. Department of Education). The CRDC is mandatory for public school districts every other school year. The 2013–14 and 2015–16 CRDC has been reported from all public local educational agencies and schools, long-term juvenile justice facilities, charter schools, alternative schools, and schools serving students with disabilities (U.S. Department of Education). The OCR relies on CRDC data it receives from public school districts when investigating complaints alleging discrimination (U.S. Department of Education).

Disparities in OSS and expulsions referrals of African-American students have been a persistent problem (Losen; 2015; Skiba et al., 2014). PBIS frameworks have been found to positively reduce OSS and expulsions (Losen; Skiba et al.); however, more attention is needed on culturally responsive school climates (Banks & Obiakor, 2015). According to Skiba et al. (2014), the evidence has suggested that specific attention to issues of race and culture maybe necessary if PBIS is to reduce disciplinary disparities.

PBIS is a positive approach to encourage good behavior, prevent exclusion practices, and improve educational results (OSEP Technical Assistance Center on PBIS, 2015). Schools and districts code of conduct often promote the zero tolerance policies that appear to be neutral on the surface; however, they lead to punitive consequences with disproportionately higher expulsions for African-American students (Skiba & Peterson, 1999).

Dress code policies for instance, appear to be neutral because everyone follows the same policy. An example case might involve an African American and White student being referred for dress code violations and both being sent to the office; the White student's parent brings a change of clothing and that student returns class. The African-American student's parent is working and informs the school that he/she is unable to bring a change of the clothing, and the African-American student is suspended or placed in in-school suspension. Recognizing that both students violated the same student code of conduct, the African-American student's parent was unable to bring a change of clothing; therefore, the student receive a much harsher consequence. School and district codes of conduct often rely on punitive and exclusionary approaches to discipline, which may be misaligned with preventative and culturally responsive approaches to discipline (Skiba et al., 2014). While the discipline policies are determined at the state level, local school districts have the discretion to modify the policies (Skiba et al., 2010). The discretion with the policy creates the potential for inconsistent application of disciplinary measures between the two levels (Skiba). Incorporating a culturally responsive component into PBIS implementation provide alternative solutions

such as a clothing bank at the school for dress code violators (Losen, 2015; Skiba, et al., 2014: U.S. Department of Education, 2014).

School-level policies and practices, as well as conditions in the community and lack of proactive health and wellness engagement, contribute to the disparate impact of students from vulnerable populations (Milner, 2014). Poor students are disciplined more frequently and are consistently over-represented in OSS, therefore, suggesting that poverty is a contributing factor to this phenomenon (Skiba & Williams, 2014). According to Skiba and Williams (2014), the relationship between poverty and racial disparities is small. Through multivariate statistical analyses, race has consistently been found to be a significant predictor of African American disproportionality in OSS (Skiba & Williams). Effective strategies for addressing this phenomenon are lacking in the research literature, and there is a need for a revised PBIS framework model with CRIL (Boneshefski & Runge, 2014; Losen, 2013; Skiba et al., 2014; Vincent et al., 2011). This study is needed to capture the lived experiences of the school leaders in reducing the disproportionality in school discipline of African-American students.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was threefold. First, I determined the extent of PBIS implementation in the large Texas high schools with low rates of OSS or expulsions of African-American students. Secondarily, I explored the school leaders' perceptions on the effective implementation of PBIS and CRIL in several Texas high schools that experienced low rates of OSS and expulsions among African-American students as indicated by the 2011-12 OCR school data. Finally, I explored school leaders'

perceptions of OSS and expulsions of African-American students in relation to PBIS. Secondary high schools in Texas implementing PBIS with a 16% to 33% African-American student population enrollment and low rates of OSS and expulsions for African-American students were targeted to participate.

Research Questions

The following four research questions were used to guide this study:

1. To what extent is PBIS implemented in the Texas high schools with low rates of OSS or expulsions of African-American students?

2. What are the school leaders' perceptions on effective implementation of PBIS?

3. How do the school leaders' perceive OSS and expulsions of African-American students in relation to PBIS?

4. To what extent is CRIL included in the implementation of PBIS?

Conceptual Framework

I developed the study using the conceptual frameworks PBIS and CRIL to discuss the disproportionality of African-American students with OSS and expulsions phenomenon. Likewise, I consider the U.S. Department of Education use of the disparate impact theory (Selmi, 2006; Shoben, 2004) to discuss prior and current research on disproportionality in school discipline of African-American students (Losen, 2015; Martin, 2012; Skiba, Chung, Trachok, Baker, Sheya, & Hughes, 2014). The 1971 Griggs vs. Duke Company Supreme Court case on employment discrimination of African American workers was the landmark case to implement the disparate impact theory (Selmi, 2006; Shoben, 2004). The legal implications of the disparate impact theory

proposes that discrimination claims can be based solely on statistics that suggest an otherwise neutral policy disparately impacts a protected class; the disparate claims do not require evidence of intent to discriminate (Selmi, 2006; Shoben, 2004; Martin, 2012; U.S. Congress, 2013). While the origin of the disparate impact theory focused on employment discrimination (Selmi, 2006; Shoben, 2004), the U.S. Department of Education adopted the theory to confront the disproportionality in school discipline crisis (Martin, 2012; Losen; 2013; Skiba et al, 2014).

Currently, school districts with policies, practices or procedures that adversely impact students of color must bare the burden of proof to justify the racial disparities (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). In September 2012, all school districts were required to report school discipline data to the U.S. Department of Education (Losen & Gillespie, 2012). Under the disparate impact theory, the intent to discriminate is not the inquiry; however, the evidence of facially neutral policies that create disproportionality in school discipline is the intent and will be addressed by the OCR (Losen; 2015; Losen & Gillespie, 2012; Martin, 2012). The first question OCR investigators ask is whether the policy or practice in question has a disparate harmful impact on a protected subgroup (Losen, 2015). If yes, the next question is whether the policy or practice is educationally necessary (Losen, 2015). If no, the policy or practice violates the law (Losen, 2015). The increasing numbers of students of color receiving OSS and expulsions prompted the federal initiative to examine differences in discipline outcomes between students of color and White students (U. S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2011; & Losen, 2013). The purpose of the OCR initiative is to determine whether the application of exclusionary

discipline policies is having a disparate impact on students of color (U. S. Commission on Civil Rights). Basically, when applying the disparate-impact theory, if the evidence establishes that a neutral discipline policy, practice, or procedure causes a significant disproportionate racial impact without legitimate justification it is considered a violation of Title VI (U. S. Commission on Civil Rights; Losen).

Likewise, even with legitimate justification of school policies, a violation may still be established under the disparate impact theory if there are equally effective alternative policies, practices, or procedures available that would have a less significant adverse racial impact (U. S. Commission on Civil Rights). "Title VI requires that a school's disciplinary policies, practices and procedures must be applied consistently to similarly situated students, regardless of their race" (U. S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2011, p.55). By analyzing the OCR school data, the research conducted in this study may provided insight to PBIS implementation in large Texas high schools from the school leaders' perspectives and explore the relationship between PBIS with CRIL and OSS and expulsions of African-American students. The school leaders' role in the PBIS implementation process provide insight to effective practices to achieve low OSS or expulsions rates of African-American students. Exploring the perceptions of the school leaders in the implementation of PBIS with a CRIL component could lead to the discovery of an effective PBIS model with best practices that promote equity and produce more positive academic outcomes for African-American students. Likewise, examining the school leaders' role as related to PBIS can challenge the current discipline

management system by directing attention to eliminate the policies and practices that contribute to the increase OSS and expulsions of African-American students.

Definitions

The eight operational definitions of my study are as follows:

Culturally Responsive Instructional Leadership (CRIL)

CRIL is recognizing one's own culturally background and knowledge, becoming aware of the cultural backgrounds of students and incorporating that cultural knowledge into their leadership practices to meet the needs of every student (Monroe, 2009). "Culturally proficient educational leaders are committed to educating all students to high levels through knowing, valuing, and using the students' cultural backgrounds, languages, and learning styles in instructional contexts" (Terrell & Lindsey, 2009, p.22).

Disparate Impact Theory

Discrimination claims based solely on statistics that suggest an otherwise neutral policy disparately impacts protected classes (Belton, 1990, pp. 227-228; Selmi, 2006, pp. 705-706; Shoben, 2004, p.598), even an unintended racially disparate impact of discipline might violate students' federal protection against discrimination (U. S. Congress, 2013, p.116; Martin, 2012, p.313).

Disproportionality

Disproportionality refers to the over or under representation of a given population group, often defined by racial and ethnic backgrounds, but also defined by socioeconomic status, national origin, English proficiency, gender, and sexual orientation, in a specific population category (U. S. Department of Education, 2004).

Disproportionality may also be defined as the representation of a group in a category that "exceeds our expectations for that group, or differs substantially from the representation of others in that category" (Skiba, Simmons, Ritter, Gibbs, Rausch, Cuadrado & Chung, 2008, p. 266).

Expulsions

Expulsion is a student's removal from the typical educational setting in an attempt to punish or to promote appropriate behavior (Noltemeyer & Mcloughlin, 2010). The expulsion of students from school frequently results in their placement in alternative education settings and juvenile detention centers (National Association of School Psychologists, 2014).

Out-of-School Suspensions (OSS)

OSS is an exclusionary discipline practice in which a student is removed from the school for part of a day or multiple days (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2003). OSS is lost classroom time and disconnection from school (National Association of School Psychologists, 2014).

Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support (PBIS)

PBIS is based on a problem-solving model and aims to prevent inappropriate behavior through teaching and reinforcing appropriate behaviors (OSEP Technical Assistance Center on PBIS, 2015). PBIS offers a range of interventions that are systematically applied to students based on their demonstrated level of need, and addresses the role of the environment as it applies to development and improvement of behavior problems (OSEP Technical Assistance Center on PBIS).

PBIS is sometimes referred to as PBS. According to National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) (2006), PBS is an empirically validated, function-based approach to eliminate challenging behaviors and replace them with pro-social skills. Use of PBS decreases the need for more intrusive or aversive interventions such as punishment or suspension that can lead to both systemic as well as individualized change (NASP, 2006). PBS can target an individual student or an entire school. The PBS concept does not focus exclusively on the student, but also includes changing environmental variables such as the physical setting, task demands, curriculum, instructional pace and individualized reinforcement (NASP). PBS is successful with a wide range of students, in a wide range of contexts, with a wide range of behaviors (NASP).

PBS can also help parents and school staff create and maintain a safe, supportive, learning environment, promote positive life skills, and reduce negative behaviors so that all students can succeed in school (Dee & Boyle, 2006). PBS focuses on both individual behavior and environmental factors and has proven to be more effective than punitive discipline strategies, such as suspensions and expulsions (Dee & Boyle). PBS programs can address issues such as bullying prevention, social skills development, resiliency building, and discipline strategies (Dee & Boyle). The U. S. Department of Education (2000) defines PBS as a general term that refers to the culturally appropriate application of positive behavioral interventions and systems to achieve socially important behavior change.

School Leaders

School Leader designates a principal, associate principal, assistant principal, or other individual who is an employee or officer of school, local educational agency, or other entity operating a school; and responsible for the daily instructional leadership and managerial operations in the school building (National Association of Elementary School Principals). According to the National Association of Secondary School Principals (2004), the principal should provide leadership in the school community by building and maintaining a vision, direction, and focus for student learning. The association argued that the principal should never act alone (National Association of Secondary School Principals).

Texas Large High Schools

The University Interscholastic League (UIL) 5A and 6A Texas high schools from the 2012-2014 list was utilized to describe and target large high schools. UIL organizes public high schools into conferences according to enrollment size for equitable competition on a statewide basis (Goodman, 1985). Texas 5A high schools have a student enrollment of 1100--2149 students (Watson, 2013). Texas 6A high schools have a student enrollment of 2090 or higher (Watson, 2013).

Limitations

As with all studies, there were some factors, which I, as the researcher, was not able to control. First, the study was limited to five large Texas high schools due to school district policies restricting high schools principals' participation with the online questionnaire. One school district required that site approval be received prior to the

online questionnaire and no follow up contact with principals for the recruitment phase of the online questionnaire. Another school district required other school leaders from the Ninth Grade High School campus to be included with the Senior High School campus for the recorded semi-structured interviews because TEA recognized the two campuses as one campus. The plan was to have ten high schools principals agree to participate. Second, the targeted 16% to 33% African-American student enrollment criteria prevented generalizability to all high schools. Nationally, African-American students comprise 16% of the student population (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Large high schools with average to above average number of African-American students are more likely to have disproportionality in school discipline (U.S. Department of Education). Third, the school discipline data source from the OCR is collected every 2 years; therefore, the 2011-12 and 2013-14 school data was the most current OCR data available at the time of this study. Finally, the PBIS framework and CRIL utilized by the schools varied on several levels.

Delimitations

The findings in the research literature have repeatedly highlighted the gaps in school discipline with students of color and students with disabilities (U.S. Department of Education, 2014; Fabelo et.al; Children's Defense Fund, 1975; Skiba, Horner, Chung, Rausch, May, & Tobin, 2011; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002). I delimited the boundary of African-American students only for this study. Noting that African Americans represent 16% of the public school population, the sample of this study was delimited to large high schools in Texas with a 16% to 33% African-American student

enrollment. Considering that the OCR school data for Texas indicated that the highest number of OSS and expulsions occur in high schools, Texas 5A and 6A high schools were targeted for this study. Furthermore, I delimited the participants to the principals due to their overall influence with discipline in the schools with the exception of one school at the requested of the school district.

Assumptions

There were three assumptions I had regarding this study to preserve anonymity and confidentiality.

1. The OCR school data was a true reflection of the schools' OSS and expulsions rates for African-American students.

2. The TEA data on the high schools was accurate and reliable.

3. School Leaders were forthcoming when discussing responses to the questions.

Summary

Despite extensive documentation of the existence of systemic racial disparities in quality educational programs, school discipline data, and the criminal justice system, there has been little systematic exploration of a possible effective PBIS model with a CRIL component to reduce the disparate impact on African-American students (Skiba et al., 2014; Gregory, Bell & Pollock, 2014). Effective schools integrate racial, ethnic, cultural, and student experiences into the curriculum (Monroe, 2016; Banks & Obiakor, 2015; Skiba et al., 2014; Gregory et al., 2014; Vincent; 2011; Skiba et al., 2011; Ladson-Billings; 2009; Monroe, 2005). The long-standing trend with school discipline data presented a compelling argument that there are some systemic problems with discipline

practices that lead to inequity with suspensions and expulsions with students of color (Losen, 2015; Losen; 2013; Losen & Gillespie, 2012; Skiba et al., 2011; Skiba et al., 2002; Children's Defense Fund, 1975). The pressure of the continuous failing system as evident by the 2014 release of the OCR school data has created a sense of urgency for action at the national, state, and local levels (U.S. Department of Education, 2014; Fabelo et al., 2011; Losen & Gillespie, 2012). Policies work best when the resources of government are brought together into the service of political objectives and those resources are utilized to influence the actions of individuals and institutions (McDonnell and Elmore, 1987). By focusing efforts to address this problem, I employed the federal policies and guidance on disproportionality in school discipline to develop an effective PBIS model with a CRIL component to reduce the disparate impact of school discipline on African-American students.

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation has five chapters. In Chapter I, I discussed the problem and purpose, explained the importance of the study, stated my research questions, and defined key terms. In Chapter II, I presented a systematic literature review on disproportionality in school discipline of African-American students and constructed a PBIS model with a CRIL component. In Chapter III, I presented my methodology and justification for the research design. Also, I included the details about the participants, the instrumentation, the data collection, the data analysis, the reliability and validity. Chapter IV is comprised of an overview and presents the findings from this study. Chapter V includes a summarization of the study and implications for addressing

disproportionality in OSS and expulsions of African-American students with an effective PBIS-CRIL framework model..

CHAPTER II

SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

Systematic Literature Review Process

In this chapter, I present a systematic literature review. Establishing a review of literature that provides best evidence for informing policy and practices is a key research objective for mapping and assessing existing literature, minimizing biases, and specifying research questions to develop the existing literature (Transfield, Denyer, & Smart, 2003). With the wealth of literature on disproportionality in school discipline of African-American students (U.S. Department of Education, 2014; Fabelo et al., 2011; Children's Defense Fund, 1975; Skiba et al., 2002), a systematic review is the best process to manage the diversity of knowledge and assess the quality of the research studies (Transfield et al., 2003). I utilized Cochrane Systematic Review in a five step process for organizing the literature including: (a) framing questions for the review; (b) identifying relevant work; (c) assessing the quality of the studies; (d) summarizing the evidence; and (e) interpreting the findings (Higgins & Green, 2011; Khan, Kunz, Kleijnen, & Antes, 2003).

Search Questions

The framing questions guiding this systematic review are:

1. What evidence-based research documents the 40 years of disproportionality of African-American students in school discipline phenomenon?

2. What PBIS and CRIL practices are currently implemented to address disproportionality?

Selection Process

The systematic review selection process is outlined in Figure 1. The search identified 536 references to screen based on an established search criterion. Scholarly books, journal articles, and research documents were reviewed through Texas A&M University's Library. Margaret Foster, a systematic review research coordinator, assisted with the search process to ensure a comprehensive literature review. Ms. Foster conducted two searches utilizing databases in ERIC, Academic Search Complete, Education Full Text, Education Source, and Educational Administration Abstracts. The first search included concepts of PBIS and principals generating 41 articles. The second search consisted of combined concepts of discipline and African-American (AA) students and disparities producing 61 articles.

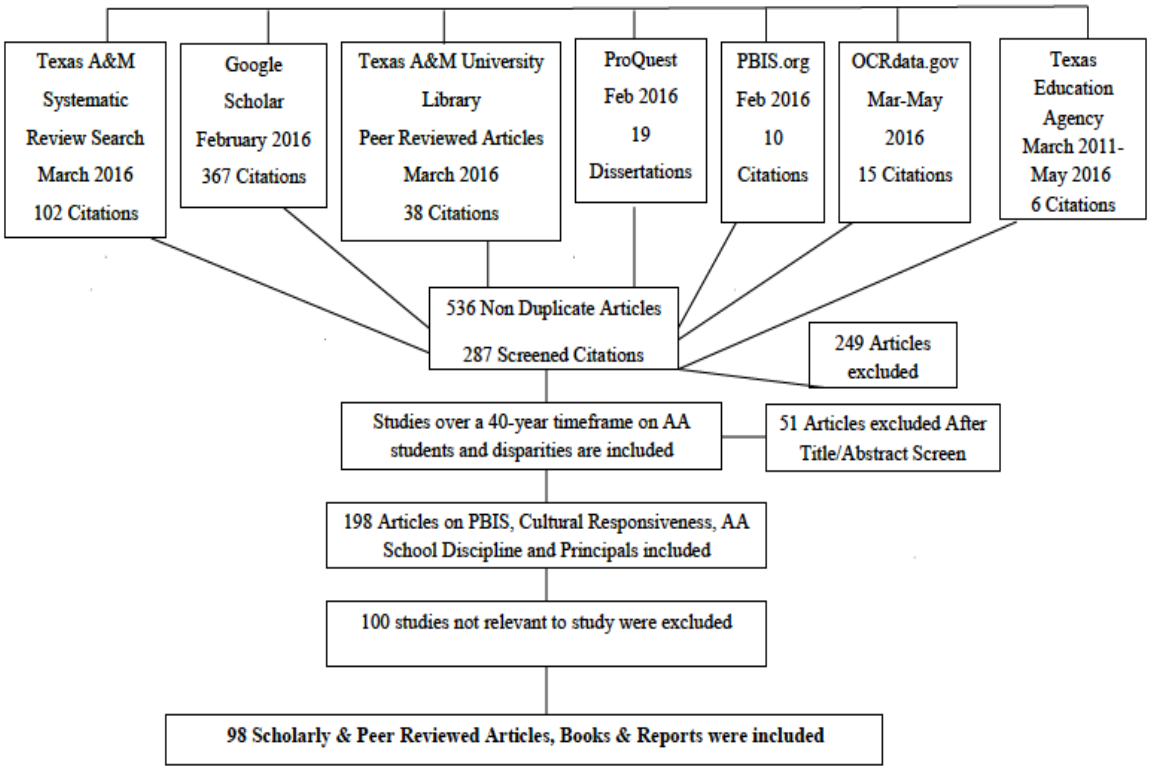

Figure 1. Systematic review process.

Likewise, I conducted a Google Scholar search of articles on PBIS and disparate impact published between 2010 and 2016; 362 articles were produced. The search was narrowed by adding African-American students, which generated 236 articles. International studies and studies specific to students with disabilities were excluded. Also, statewide studies focusing on students groups other than African-American students were excluded. State and Federal school discipline data and PBIS information were generated from the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), Texas Education Agency (TEA), and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) websites.

Finally, I conducted two ProQuest searches for dissertations related to my study published between 2010-2016. The first ProQuest search included PBIS and principals

in which 19 dissertations surfaced; however, upon examination only three dissertations were related to PBIS and principals. The second ProQuest search included African-American students and disparities producing two of same dissertations from the previous search; both dissertation topics were related to academic disparities instead of OSS and expulsions. An outline of the topics to be included in the review of literature was created to select and organize articles from all the searches. A global search using the same key terms in ProQuest Dissertations and Theses revealed two additional dissertations similar to this study; however, both studies were on PBIS implementation and leadership in other states.

Screening the full text illustrated of the 198 scholarly and peer-reviewed journal articles, dissertations, excluding studies and reports not relevant to this study, therefore, yielding 98 scholarly and peer-reviewed articles, books, dissertations and reports for final analysis. There was some overlap with articles showing up in multiple searches. After excluding the articles not related to this study, 44 of the 102 systematic search articles were selected, 38 of the Google Scholar articles and books, 5 reports from Texas Education Agency website, 5 reports for the Office of Civil Rights website, 4 reports from the NASP website, 1 report from the Safe & Civil Schools website and the OSEP Technical Assistance Center information from the PBIS website. Ninety-eight scholarly and peer-reviewed articles, books, and reports are included in this review. Finally, there were a total of five articles from the 98 that were excluded after discovering the information needed was generated from another source; therefore, the primary source was utilized instead.

The synthesis matrix in Table 1 was used to organize the most relevant resources in this literature review and serve as the foundation of the study. A synthesis matrix is an effective strategy for assessing the quality and relevance of research studies and organizing the studies for this review of literature. Critical evaluation of eligible studies is needed to assess the quality of the studies included in a review (Harris, Quatman, Manring, Siston & Flanigan, 2013). The top eleven studies highlighted in Table 1 foregrounds the discussions of the disproportionality of African-American students in school discipline phenomenon and PBIS implementation.

Table 1.
Synthesis Matrix for Systematic Literature Review

Title & Author	Date	Methods	Key Points	Limitations
Office of Civil Rights School Data U.S. Department of Education	2014	Quantitative	National study revealed patterns of disparities in school discipline for students of color.	School Data is 2011-12 school year
The Color of Discipline, Skiba	2002	Quantitative	Middle School study on disproportionality of African Americans. A highly respected expert on the topic.	More than 10 years old
Race is Not Neutral, Skiba, Horner, Raush & Tobin	2011	Quantitative	National investigation of African American and Latino students	2007 Discipline Data
School suspensions: Are they helping children? Children's Defense Fund	1975	Mixed Methods	The 1st National study to bring disproportionality in school discipline with students of color	More than 40 years old
School Discipline and Disparate Impact, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights	2011	Mixed Methods	Disparate Impact Theory and disproportionality in school discipline	No guidance on cultural adaptations
OSEP Technical Assistance Center on PBIS	2015	Descriptive Information	Background information on PBIS and the Technical Support Centers	No state list of PBIS schools with level of implementation
Breaking School Rules Report, Fabelo, Thompson, Plotkin, Carmichael, Marchbanks, & Booth	2011	Quantitative Descriptive Information	A statewide study on school discipline and the juvenile justice involvement	No research study component on best practices and no qualitative research

Table 1. Continued

Title & Author	Date	Methods	Key Points	Limitations
Discipline Policies, Successful Schools, Racial Justice, and the Law, Losen	2013	Quantitative	Disparate Impact Theory: Better alternatives are available--PBIS	No culturally responsive component and no qualitative research
Addressing Disproportionate Discipline Practices within a school-wide behavioral interventions and supports framework, Boneshefski & Runge	2014	Quantitative	PBIS and disproportionality in discipline.	No information on the principal role in PBIS implementation and no qualitative research
Toward a Conceptual Integration of Cultural Responsiveness and Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support, Vincent, Randall, Cartledge, Tobin & Swain-Bradway	2011	Descriptive Information	PBIS and culturally responsiveness	No information on the principal role in PBIS
New and Developing Research on Disparities in Discipline, Skiba, Arrendondo & Rausch	2014	Descriptive Information	Policy Recommendations for improving disproportionality	No research study

Introduction to Systematic Review

National and state data show consistent patterns of African American disproportionality in school discipline over the past 40 years (U.S. Department of Education, 2014; Skiba et al., 2014; Losen, 2015; Butler, Lewis, Moore, & Scott, 2012; Fabelo et al., 2011; Skiba et al, 2011; Skiba et. al., 2002; Children's Defense Fund, 1975). The discipline gaps between children of color and Whites have been well documented in a range of exclusionary discipline practices including office disciplinary referrals, suspensions, expulsions, and corporal punishment (Skiba, et al.). The discipline gaps or overrepresentation of the children of color in school discipline is called disproportionality (U. S. Department of Education, 2004). Disproportionality in this review refers to the overrepresentation of African American students in OSS and expulsions (U. S. Department of Education). Within this review of literature, I will discuss the long-standing trend of disproportionality of African-American students with OSS and expulsions, the disparate impact, and solutions for improvement. According to scholarly researchers in the field (Losen, 2015; Boneshefski & Runge, 2014; Skiba et al., 2014; Vincent et al., 2011; Losen: 2013; Losen & Gillespie, 2012; Fabelo et al., 2011; Skiba et al, 2011; Skiba et. al., 2002;), CRIL is a needed component of PBIS implementation for addressing disproportionality among students of color in school discipline crisis. Thus, effective PBIS frameworks and CRIL will also be examined in this review.

Disproportionality in OSS and Expulsions of African-American Students

In 1975, researchers with the Children's Defense Fund released the publication, "School Suspensions: Are They Helping Children?" to discuss the racial differences in school punishment that emerged from the data and brought national attention to this phenomenon (Children's Defense Fund, 1975). The survey data from the Children's Defense Fund suggested that racial disproportionality was particularly problematic in secondary schools as the suspension rates for African-American students were significantly higher than their peers (Children's Defense Fund). The OCR found that 67.9% of the 2,862 school districts included in the OCR data had higher suspension rates among African-American students than White youths (Children's Defense Fund). The report also states 27% of Black students were suspended three or more times, whereas the rate among White students was 11% (Children's Defense Fund). The survey data from the Children's Defense Fund also suggested that racial disproportionality was particularly problematic in secondary schools as the suspension rate for African-American students was 12.8% as compared to 4.1% among White students. The Children's Defense Fund first brought the issue of racial disproportionality to national attention in 1975, but nearly 40 years later students of color and underserved students are still overrepresented in suspensions and expulsions (U. S. Department of Education, 2014). Also, students of color are attending and completing college at far lower rates than their peers (U. S. Department of Education, 2014).

Skiba et al. (2002) conducted a yearlong study of 19 middle schools in an urban school district and found racial gaps in school discipline. The student's race appeared to override forces stemming from socioeconomic status (Skiba et.al). These researchers

noted that poverty status and race both place students at additional risk for being disciplined; however, low socioeconomic status could not be used to explain away racial differences in referrals, suspension, or expulsion" (p. 179). The authors' conclusion underscores the continued saliency of race in public education and supports the need to learn more about the intersection of race and discipline in school. The discourse on racial and ethnic disproportionality seemed to be constrained by differences that artificially put individual student characteristics against systemic factors (Skiba et al.). The authors suggest that student characteristics such as student aggression and disengagement from school counter factors like implicit bias or community violence as the reason why some groups are overrepresented in suspensions or expulsions .

Similarly, in an earlier study, the findings in Morris and Goldring (1999) study on magnet schools and equity revealed disparities among African-American students. The results indicated that there was one disciplinary action for every three African-American students in magnet schools (Morris & Goldring, 1999). Also, the findings indicated that a little more than one disciplinary action for every two African-American students in non-magnet schools (Morris & Goldring). Disciplinary actions involving White students, on the other hand, were one for every eight White students in magnet schools, and one for every three White students in non-magnet schools (Morris & Goldring). In spite of the school type, the discipline disparities were nearly the same for African-American students (Morris & Goldring).

Nearly a decade later, a national investigation of African-American and Latino disproportionality in school discipline in elementary and secondary schools revealed racial disparities in office referrals (Skiba et al., 2011). The schools in the sample had

been involved with School-wide Positive Behavior Supports (SWPBS) for at least a year. PBIS and SWPBS will be discussed in more details later in this review. SWPBS is a school-wide approach to the prevention of problem behavior that is implemented in a multi-tiered system. Although evidence supports the efficacy of SWPBS in reducing office referral rates, few investigations have explored the issue of PBIS and cultural variations or how SWPBS will affect rates of disciplinary disproportionality (Banks & Obiakor, 2005; Vincent et al., 2011; Skiba et al., 2011; Skiba et al., 2014). The findings from the study indicated that African-American and Latino students were more likely to receive expulsions or OSS as consequences for the same or similar problem behavior (Skiba et al., 2011). The authors suggested that cultural mismatch or racial stereotyping was contributing to the disproportionality of school discipline with the two student groups (Skiba et al., 2011).

Likewise, Monroe (2009) discussed the positive impact on student discipline as related to the perceptions, work, and backgrounds of effective African American and White teachers at an Urban Middle School. Cultural responsiveness is the conceptual framework that Monroe (2009) utilized to explore the issue of student discipline in a predominately African American middle school through the lenses of effective classroom teachers. In cultural responsive classrooms, teachers would first acknowledge their own cultural socialization and reflect on how their beliefs and decisions can create and sustain forms of inequity such as the discipline gap (Monroe, 2009). The second step to creating the culturally responsive classroom is the teacher's knowledge of the students' cultural backgrounds (Monroe).

Although the history of extensive documentation of the existence of racial disparities in the school discipline data, there has been little systemic exploration of possible explanations (Skiba et al., 2011). Over four decades after the CDR's analysis of the 1975 OCR data, the disproportionality in school discipline of African-American students phenomenon has continued. The persistent trend with the school discipline disparities presents a compelling argument that there are some systemic problems with the discipline practices that lead to inequity with OSS and expulsions among students of color. Even with the positive results of the Urban Middle School discussed above, African-American students still were much more likely than White students to be disciplined (Monroe, 2009). The recommendations in these studies suggest that schools have the power to change their rates of OSS and expulsions with African-American students (Skiba et al., 2014). When school level variables such as the principal perspective on discipline were considered as part of the model for addressing disproportionality, discipline was significantly reduced (Skiba et al.).

The landmark Supreme Court case, *Brown v. Board of Education*, set a path toward equalizing educational opportunity for all children (Townsend-Walker, 2014; Skiba et al., 2011). The outcome of the class ruled that separate but equal was unconstitutional; however, the segregation has surfaced in a different form (Townsend-Walker; Skiba et al.). Despite the intentions of Brown's 1954 Supreme Court ruling, African-American students subsequently have received harsher exclusionary discipline (Townsend-Walker; Skiba et al.). The zero tolerance policies bestow the growing trend of increasing numbers of OSS and expulsions (Townsend-Walker, 2014; Davis-Ganao,

Suero Silvestre & Glenn, 2013; Welch & Payne, 2010). The widespread use of zero-tolerance discretionary policies negatively impact African-American students academic performance (Hoffman-Miller, 2009; Wallace, John, Goodkind, Wallace & Bachman, 2008).

Noltemeyer and Mcloughlin (2010) suggested that school typology plays a role in the disproportionality in school discipline phenomenon. Typology could refer to a school's size, geographic location, community income levels or other characteristics of the school (Noltemeyer & Mcloughlin, 2010). In a study conducted of Ohio school districts in 2007-08, the researcher discovered there was a significant difference that exist between school typologies when controlling for proverty (Noltemeyer & Mcloughlin). While the results of the Ohio study provided some insight that school typology could play a role, the findings were consistent with other researchers in that even when controlling for poverty the disproportionality of African-American students still remained. According to McIntosh, Girvan, Horner and Smolkowski (2014), a number of structural explanations for the disproportionality have been suggested, but none have empirical support. African-American students are referred and suspended at higher rates than their White peers, even after controlling for individual socioeconomic status and other demographic variables (McIntosh et al., 2014). There is no published research demonstrating that African-American students have higher base rates of problem behavior (McIntosh).

In an analysis of the 97,000 public schools in the United States, the U.S. Department of Education released a report that found a pattern of inequality in school discipline (Rich, 2014). Students of color and students with disabilities were disciplined at higher rates than their peers. According to the OCR school data, African American students represented 16% of the student population; however, they represented between 32-42% of the students suspended or expelled compared to 31-40% suspension rate for White students who comprised 51% of the student population (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). The total number of students included in the study was 49 million. Single OSS included 1.9 million students; multiple OSS represented 1.55 million and expulsions 130,000 students (U.S. Department of Education). In Figure 2 the rates of suspensions and expulsions by race and ethnicity are displayed. African American students represented 33% of single OSS, 42% of multiple OSS and 34% of expulsions; accounting for more than double their enrollment in all three areas (U.S. Department of Education).

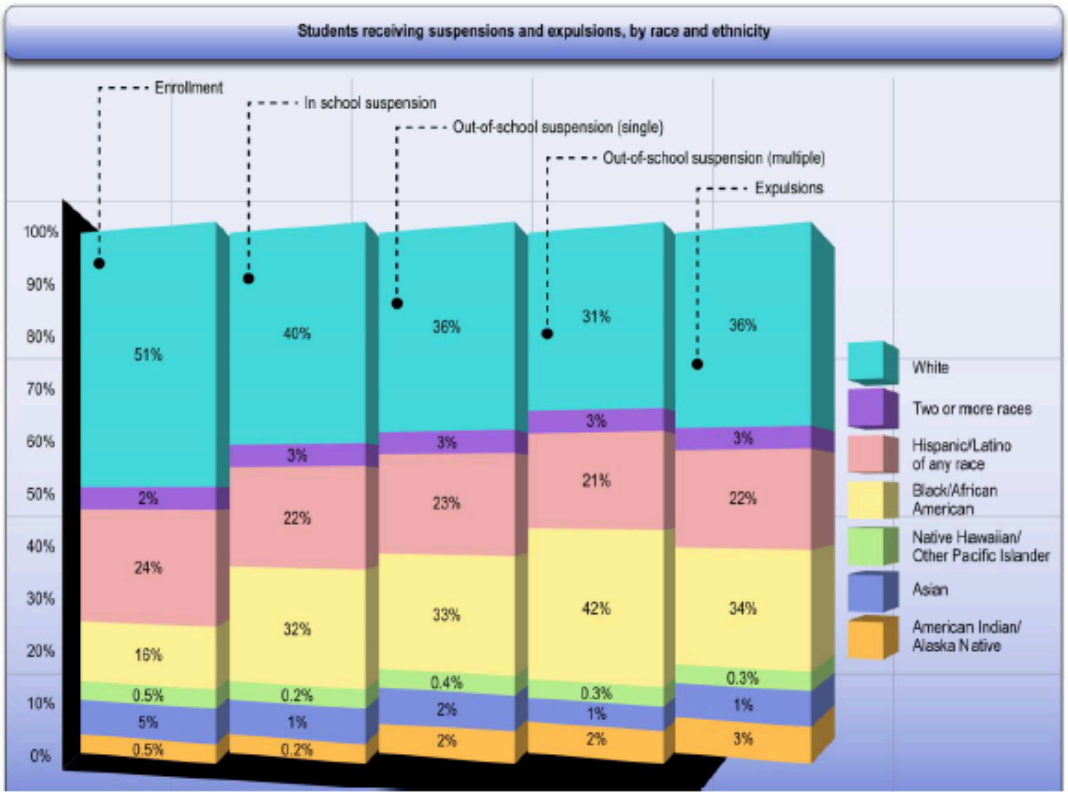

Figure 2. Civil Rights Data Collection: Data Snapshot School Discipline 2011-12. (Reprinted from U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights report, 2014.)

Nationwide, data collected by OCR indicated that youths of color and youths with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by suspensions and expulsions. The 2011-12 school data showed that African American students are suspended and expelled at three times the rate of White students and Latino students are twice as likely (U. S. Department of Education, 2014). Furthermore, students who are suspended or expelled from school may be unsupervised during daytime hours and cannot benefit from great teaching, positive peer interactions, and adult mentorship offered in class and school (U. S. Department of Education, 2014) and will often have gaps in achievement (Gregory,

Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). Astonishingly, the racial gaps begin with pre-K and continue through the 12th grade (U. S. Department of Education, 2014). African American children make up 18% of preschool enrollment; however, they account for nearly 50% of all preschool children who are suspended more than once (U. S. Department of Education, 2014).

Contrastingly, the OCR study found that more than 70% of White students attend schools that offer a full range of math and science courses (U. S. Department of Education, 2014). In comparison to the courses offered above, only half of African American students, two-thirds of Latinos, and less than half of American Indian and Native Alaskan have access to those courses (U. S. Department of Education). The U.S. Department of Education (2014) reported that African American, Latino, American Indian and Native Alaskan students are three times as likely as White students to attend schools with higher numbers of first-year teachers. The U.S. Department of Education (2014) presented Former President Obama's proposal for the new phase of the Race to the Top competitive grant program as an ally for positive discipline. The Former President allocated $300 million in incentives to states and districts that incorporated programs targeted at closing the educational gaps identified in the data (Rich, 2014). The $300 million incentive was an inducement to promote an action to change the educational gaps of the African American and Latino students (Rich).

Similarly, a comprehensive study of Texas students showed that African American students and students with educational disabilities were disproportionately more likely to be removed from the classroom for disciplinary reasons (Fabelo et al.,

2011). A greater majority of African-American male students had at least one discretionary violation (Fabelo et al.). African American male students were more likely to have at least one discretionary violation; approximately 83% compared to 74% for Hispanic male students, and 59% for White male students (Fabelo et al.). The results of the data showed that students, who were repeatedly disciplined, were more likely to be held back a grade or to drop out of school than were students not involved in the disciplinary system (Fabelo et al.). Of all students who were suspended or expelled 31% repeated their grade at least once (Fabelo et al.).

In contrast, only 5% of students with no disciplinary involvement were held back (Fabelo et al., 2011). About 10% of students suspended or expelled between seventh and twelfth grade dropped out (Fabelo et al.). About 59% of those students disciplined 11 times or more did not graduate from high school during the study period (Fabelo et al.). When a student was suspended or expelled, his or her likelihood of being involved in the juvenile justice system the subsequent year increased significantly (Fabelo et al.). However, once again, the more surprising fact is that only three percent of the disciplinary actions were for conduct for which state law mandates suspensions and expulsions (Fabelo et al.). The remaining disciplinary actions were made at the discretion of school officials, primarily in response to violations of local schools' conduct codes (Fabelo et al.).

The Department of Justice awarded nearly $1.5 million through the 2012 Field Initiated Research and Evaluation Program to focus on research and evaluation studies of school-based practices that relate to reducing student victimization and the risk of

delinquency (Fabelo et al., 2011). As one of the grant recipients, Texas A & M University received funding to explore the potential of the school discipline system as an intervention to reduce juvenile justice contact among all youth, particularly youth of color (Fabelo). Excessive use of harsh disciplinary practices limit African American students access to a quality education, produces inequitable learning opportunities, and contribute to the negative educational outcomes of African-American students (NASP, 2013). NASP supported the U. S. Department of Education school discipline initiative and recommended that school psychologists work proactively to assist with the development, implementation, and monitoring systems for promoting positive learning and behavioral strategies (NASP).

Disparate Impact

Not only are underserved students suspended, expelled, and drop out at higher rates, but they are less likely to have access to strong teachers and challenging curriculum (Gregory et al., 2010). African-American students are placed in foster care at more than twice the rate of White students (McIntosh et al., 2014). Structural barriers, including inequitable funding systems, impede progress for vulnerable students (Morris & Perry, 2016). Unequal exclusionary discipline policies and practices contribute to racial inequities in academic opportunities and hinder academic growth African-American students (Morris & Perry). Unfortunately, rather than organizing our educational system to pair these children with our most expert teachers, who can help students catch up with their more advantaged peers, the opposite is done. The children who most need strong teachers are assigned, on average, to teachers with less

experience, less education, and less skill than those who teach other children (Rich, 2014).

Certainly, there are dedicated teachers who have devoted their lives to low-income but they are the exception (Ladson-Billings, 2009). According to the U.S. Department of Education (2014), regardless of how teacher quality is measured, poor and minority children get fewer than there fair share of high-quality teachers. Children in the highest-poverty schools are assigned to novice teachers almost twice as often as children in low-poverty schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Correspondingly, students in high-minority schools are assigned to novice teachers at twice the rate as students in schools without many minority students (U.S. Department of Education). The CRDC 2011-12 report also revealed school climate disparities related to student discipline (U.S. Department of Education, 2014).

African-Americans students are also overrepresented in the criminal justice system (Kyckelhahn & Martin, 2013). An overwhelming amount of research suggests that systematic policy failures such as zero tolerance discipline (Monroe, 2016; McIntosh, Girvan, Horner, & Smolkowski, 2014; Okonofua & Eberhardt, 2015; Skiba & Peterson, 1999), cultural mismatch and engagement issues (Bradshaw, Mitchell, O"Brennan, & Leaf, 2010;) are contributing to the schools to prison pipeline tragedy (Spiller & Porter, 2014; Kyckelhahn & Martin, 2013; Townsend-Walker, 2012). The fact that the United States accounts for only five percent of the World's population of people but represent 25% of the World's prison population is a national state of urgency (Kyckelhahn & Martin). African Americans are jailed nearly four times the rate of

Whites at a rate of 36% incarcerated despite making up only 13% percent of the Americans U.S. population (Kyckelhahn & Martin). African Americans constituted nearly one million of the total 2.3 million incarcerated populations. One in six African American men had been incarcerated as of 2001 (Kyckelhahn & Martin). If current trends continue, one in three black males born today can expect to spend time in prison during his lifetime (Kyckelhahn & Martin). Nationwide, African Americans represent 26% of juvenile arrests (Kyckelhahn & Martin). Former President Obama was the first sitting president to visit a U.S. federal prison and he argued that an overhaul is needed to fix the U.S. criminal justice system (Vera Institute of Justice, 2012).

Civil Rights Attorney and researcher, Michelle Alexander (2012) proposed in her book, *The New Jim Crow*, that the war on drugs is a deceptive politic plan for mass incarceration in the age of colorblindness. Shockingly, there are more federal incarcerations for drug offenses than there are for any of the major offenses such as homicide, aggravated assault, or kidnapping combined (Vera Institute of Justice, 2012). Furthermore, the cost to operate the prison system is enormous. The United States spent over $80 billion on corrections expenditures in 2010 and the average cost per taxpayer for an inmate is approximately $29,000 (Kyckelhahn & Martin, 2013). Texas Department of Criminal Justice had a $2.5 billion prison expenditures budget; however, the state spent $3.3 billion costing $21,390 per inmate (Vera Institute of Justice, 2012). Ironically, we are spending more on one inmate than a family of four living in poverty at $24,250 on the federal level and nearly as much at the state level (U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 2015).

One hypothesis to the disproportionality of African-American students in school discipline phenomenon is that African-American youth have higher rates of behavior problems (Bradshaw et al., 2010) or prior problem behavior accounts for the racial gap in school suspensions (Wright, Morgan, Coyne, Beaver & Barnes, 2014). Expert researchers such as Skiba et al. (2010) and Losen (2013) have provided feedback to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights that suggested there are no studies using direct observation of student behaviors that could establish that African-American students misbehave at a significantly higher rate (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights). Prior research on teacher rating of student behavior have shown a slightly higher rate of behavior problems with African-American students (Bradshaw et al., 2010). Contrastingly, other researchers (Monroe, 2005; Townsend, 2000) have theorized that the disproportionality of African-American students in school discipline phenomenon reflects a potential cultural bias embedded in school discipline practices. Cultural mismatch can increase the probability of a discrepancy between what African-American students perceive as being appropriate and what teachers and administrators expect as acceptable behavior (Skiba et al., 2011). For instance, Neal, McCray, Webb-Johnson and Bridgest (2003) found that African-American students who walked with a stroll were more likely to be perceived by teachers as being lower achieving, higher aggression, and more likely to need special education services.

According to Skiba et al. (2011), African-American students are more likely to receive office discipline referrals than White students; therefore, increasing the opportunity for exclusionary practices. Research findings from several studies also

indicate that African-American students are often referred to the office for less serious offenses than White students (Monroe, 2005; Skiba et al., 2011). Previous research indicated that African-American students are more likely to be referred for subjective reasons such as disrespect or excessive noise than White students (Skiba et al., 2002). Racial bias and cultural differences have also been identified as contributors to disproportionate suspensions of African-American students (Gibson, Wilson, Haight, Kayama, & Marshall, 2014). Despite the overwhelming amount of evidence regarding the long-standing trend of disproportionality of African-American students in school discipline, the new regulations on school districts created controversy over the OCR school data release (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2011). The OCR application of the disparate impact theory to address disproportionality in school discipline raised concerns over whether the enforcement imposes a burden on schools (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights). Some conservatives expressed concerns that the added pressure on schools could potentially weaken disciplinary measures, which will increase disruptive behavior (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights).

Nonetheless, the counter argument for using the disparate impact theory suggests that implementing programs to reduce disproportionality with certain groups may reduce disparities and promote equitable school discipline policies and practices (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2011). The OCR proposes that using the disparate-impact theory analysis provides an opportunity to look beyond the numbers and implement policies and practices to reduce disproportionality of African-American students in school discipline (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights). This analysis is seen by some as

holding schools accountable for the disciplinary policies that disproportionately exclude students of color from the school environment (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights). The OCR guidance also provides school districts with the opportunity to identify alternative disciplinary practices that are designed to address and improve the school (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights). According to OCR, discipline disparities have been linked to increased likelihood of students dropping out of school, decreased academic achievement, increased involvement with the juvenile-justice system, and impairment of future college and employment opportunities (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights); therefore, school districts have the flexibility to pursue initiatives based on the needs of their students. The OCR's mission is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence through enforcement of civil rights (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights).

PBIS

Noting that federal actions are in place to address disproportionality in school discipline, there are some resource information regarding educational services for school districts. Specifically, Congress amended the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1997 and 2004 to address the need for schools to use evidence-based approaches to proactively address the behavioral needs of students with disabilities (OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2015). Congress explicitly recognized the potential of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in IDEA thus incorporating it in the current version of the law as amended in 2004. IDEA requires the Individual Education Plan (IEP) team to consider the use of PBIS for any student whose behavior

impedes his or her learning or the learning of others (OSEP Technical Assistance Center). PBIS is a positive approach to encourage good behavior, prevent exclusion practices, and improve educational results (OSEP Technical Assistance Center).

Furthermore, Congress has also provided competitive grant funds to ensure that professional development training for general and special educators include PBIS as a research-based strategy for addressing student behaviors (OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2015). Since PBIS is usually recommended district-wide or school-wide to the entire student population, the cost to implement it maybe a challenge for educators. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2014), professional development is key for proper implementation of PBIS and the improved behavioral outcomes that PBIS can foster. With federal law being connected to PBIS, the U.S. Department of Education's OSEP established a technical assistance center on PBIS to define, develop, implement, and evaluate a multi-tiered approach to improve the capacity of states, districts, and schools to establish, scale-up, and sustain the PBIS framework (OSEP Technical Assistance Center).

While there is a wealth of information and resources available on the OSEP center website, no comprehensive list of schools identifying the current levels of PBIS implementation for Texas schools exists. Moreover, the PBIS network including all fifty states in the United States and Guam has a PBIS State Coordinator to provide technical assistance to school districts (OSEP Technical Assistance Center). The State Coordinator for Texas is located in Houston at the Region IV Education Service Center. There are 20 regional education service centers in Texas. Surprisingly, no uniformity exists between

the centers in that organizational structure for the Technical Assistance Centers were not apparent. Furthermore, there was very limited information about the cost of PBIS training and services provided by the education service centers.

PBIS is based on a problem-solving model and aims to prevent inappropriate behavior through teaching and reinforcing appropriate behaviors. PBIS offers a range of interventions that are systematically applied to students based on their demonstrated level of need, and addresses the role of the environment as it applies to development and improvement of behavior problems (OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2015). According to NASP (2006), PBIS is an empirically validated, function-based approach to eliminate challenging behaviors and replace them with pro-social skills. Use of PBIS decreases the need for more intrusive or aversive interventions such as punishment or suspension that can lead to both systemic as well as individualized change (NASP, 2006). PBIS can target an individual student or an entire school, as it does not focus exclusively on the student, but also includes changing environmental variables such as the physical setting, task demands, curriculum, instructional pace and individualized reinforcement (NASP). PBIS is successful with a wide range of students, in a wide range of contexts, with a wide range of behaviors (NASP).

Also, PBIS helps parents and school staff create a safe and supportive learning environment so all students can be successful in school (Dee & Boyle, 2006). PBIS focuses on both individual behavior and environmental factors with effective strategies to reduce suspension and expulsion (Dee & Boyle). PBIS programs can address issues such as bullying prevention, social skills development, resiliency building, and discipline

strategies (Dee & Boyle). The U. S. Department of Education (2000) defined PBIS as a general term that refers to the culturally appropriate application of positive behavioral interventions and systems to achieve socially important behavior change. Surprisingly, culturally responsive strategies are rarely endorsed in classrooms (Bradshaw et al., 2010).

Federal Guidance on PBIS

In January 2014, U.S. Department of Education released a resource guide to state, district, and school-level officials outlining the principles for improving school climate and discipline practice. The resource guide included: (a) an organized set of guiding principles and related action steps to help schools to improve school climate, improve discipline policy and practice, and reduce disproportionality; (b) a directory of federal resources to assist with the implementation of the principles; (c) a compendium of state-level laws and regulations relevant to school discipline policy and practice; and (d) an overview of the initiative's activities (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Moreover, the U.S. Department of Education (2014) identified three guiding principles for policymakers, district officials, school leaders, and stakeholders to consider as they work to improve school climate and discipline.

Principle one---create positive climates and focus on prevention. The first principle is to create positive climates and focus on prevention. Schools that foster positive school climates can help engage all students in learning by preventing problem behaviors and intervening effectively to support struggling students (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Under principle one, the staff, families, students, and stakeholders

would be involved with developing the climate goals that compliment the school's academic goals (U.S. Department of Education). One example of a program that uses tiered supports is PBIS. The PBIS framework has been shown to be effective in reducing the need for disciplinary actions and improving academic, social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes for students (NASP, 2010). The federal and state requirement to implement PBIS is an example of a current system in place to address the gaps in discipline; however, the disparities still exist especially with African-American students.

Principle two---Develop clear and consistent expectations and consequences. The second guiding principle is to develop clear, appropriate, and consistent expectations, and consequences to address disruptive student behaviors. Creating positive school climates and providing students with varying levels of support will help students improve behavior, increase engagement, and boost achievement (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Implementing a school-wide discipline policy that sets high expectations for behavior, provides clear, developmentally appropriate, and proportional consequences for misbehavior will increase positive outcomes for student behavior (U.S. Department of Education). Likewise, using disciplinary incidents to help students learn from their mistakes, improve their behavior, and meet high expectations can positively impact the classroom environment. Also, the policies should include appropriate protections for students with disabilities and strong due process protections for all students (U.S. Department of Education).

Principle three---Ensure fairness, equity, and continuous improvement. Finally, the third principle is to ensure fairness, equity, and continuous improvement

(U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Schools that build staff capacity and continuously evaluate the school's discipline policies and practices are more likely to ensure fairness and equity and promote achievement for all students (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Schools and districts should ensure that school discipline is applied fairly and should continually monitor and improve disciplinary policies and practices. Also, schools should provide ongoing training for staff and equip them with skills and strategies to reinforce appropriate behaviors. Furthermore, school administrators should commit to regular evaluation of the school's discipline policies and practices and monitor progress toward the school climate and discipline goals (U.S. Department of Education, 2014).

In a mixed methods study conducted of California principals participating with a PBIS Cohort, the findings revealed that shared decision-making and developing a team concept were essential to the implementation of PBIS (Miller, 2012). The purpose of the study was to analyze effective strategies used by principals to implement and encourage teacher support of PBIS implementation (Miller, 2012). The study consisted of schools from 15 school districts across central California. A common thread that emerged was the importance of the principals' ability to create a team concept among the staff to drive implementation of PBIS (Miller, 2012). Likewise, the principals' missions and beliefs were paramount to the successful effective implementation of a new program (Miller, 2012). Also, the author discovered that the level of implementation was significantly higher in schools where the principal made the decision to implement the PBIS framework, rather than the district (Miller, 2012). Apparently, the principals having the

freewill to decide if to implement a PBIS framework had an impact on the outcome. According to Handler, Rey, Connell, Their, Feinberg, and Putnam (2007), a district's commitment to the new initiative can support or delay the ability of a school to implement PBIS.

Furthermore, the research question regarding the difference in the number of students of color suspension and expulsions prior to and after the implementation of PBIS was important information to consider for this study. The finding from Miller's (2012) study indicated a decrease in suspensions by 24.4% in 13 schools; however, no information was available about the decrease across student demographics. The reason stated for the information being unavailable was due to an 80% or higher population of students of color (Miller, 2012). Shockingly, according the author, the school districts in California that participated in this study did not disaggregate school discipline data by ethnicity (Miller, 2012). The notion of 15 school districts in the U. S. not collecting that school discipline data by student demographics is not only troubling; however, it validates the need for the OCR to provide guidance on school discipline to school district throughout country.

Recognizing the national urgency to respond to the disproportionality in school discipline crisis and the new federal guidelines about school discipline across student demographics, it would be interesting to review findings of a follow up study to see how the school districts are meeting the new school discipline data requirements from the OCR. Likewise, the author noted the PBIS as a successful school-wide initiative to address issues related to school culture and climate; however, considering that over 80%

of the student population were students are color, no information was included about CRIL in the PBIS implementation (Miller, 2012). While the findings from this study provided some resourceful information on the role of the principal, the study was limited in that there were no means for the researcher to review the decrease in suspensions data across demographics (Miller).

Administrators are in a unique position to support and drive the implementation of a successful PBIS and CRIL framework. The principal possesses the ability to motivate staff, provide guidance, and organizational support for high quality PBIS program implementation (Debnam, 2013). For example, a high school urban principal implementing PBIS for the first-time stated that her ability to make the cultural shift was crucial to reducing educational disparities in the community (Peterson, 2013). Active leadership and ongoing support from administrators create a sense of urgency with implementing PBIS (Kennedy, Mimmack, & Flannery, 2012). When administrators are passive and invisible with PBIS implementation staff commitment diminishes (Kennedy et al., 2012). Incorporating a Gallery Walk into the PBIS implementation plan is an excellent strategy for maintaining sustainability and building capacity for ongoing improvements. Schools must work collaboratively with the community to examine issues of school discipline, cultural difference, and include pedagogical practices to develop effective strategies for increasing positive behavioral skills with African-American students (Banks & Obiakor, 2015).

State and Local Level PBIS

Schools and districts decide how they will provide PBIS to students. Therefore, a variety of PBIS programs and interventions are occurring in schools throughout the country. Because no uniform compliance procedures for PBIS currently exist and the lack of funding to support full implementation with fidelity, there are no long-term systemic plans in place for most Texas school districts. Over the years PBIS in some schools and districts has evolved into a framework with evidenced-based practices for promoting a positive school climate; however, once again, no uniform procedures exist on how to capture the effectiveness of PBIS in relation to school discipline data by student demographic populations. According to the OSEP Technical Assistance Center on PBIS (2015), the key components of a PBIS framework include content knowledge, implementation features, self-assessment, and action planning. Content knowledge consists of the implementation practices, systems, and procedures (OSEP Technical Assistance Center). The implementation features refer to the systems and organizational elements with a school or districts (OSEP Technical Assistance Center. Lastly, there must be tools to self-assess to make ongoing improvements through action plans (OSEP Technical Assistance Center).

The PBIS center provides an implementation blueprint to schools and district as a guide to improve implementation of specific systems or organizational approach such as Schoolwide Positive Behavioral Supports (SWPBS) (OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2015). The purpose of the blueprint is to make the conceptual theory, organizational models, and practices of SWPBS more accessible to schools, districts,

and state education systems (OSEP Technical Assistance Center). The SWPBS implementation blueprint consists of three procedural and system guides to facilitate implementation of PBIS: implementation, evaluation, and professional development. In the implementation phase the guidelines to the procedures and process of general implementation of SWPBS framework includes a general understanding of SWPBS, and systems level implementation for accuracy, durability, and scalability (OSEP Technical Assistance Center). The evaluation phase introduces an overview of the SWPBS data-based decision making questions, the tools, and procedures required to answer relevant implementation, and outcome questions for evaluation, research, and practice (OSEP Technical Assistance Center). Moreover, the professional development phase is an overview of the SWPBS approach to preparing personnel and settings for the accurate, durable, and scalable implementation of SWPBS procedures, processes, and content (OSEP Technical Assistance Center).

In a study on the district-wide implementation of PBIS in a large urban inner-city Texas school district the findings showed that leadership and a high level of buy-in from stakeholders was needed to support inclusionary practices that were fair and equitable to improve schools (Richards, Aguilera, Murakami, & Weiland, 2014). The researcher asked, "What are the challenges of large urban inner-city school districts in the implementation of school-wide systems such as PBIS?" to guide the study (Richards et al., 2014). According to Handler et al. (2007), there are five key components to successful PBIS implementation: (a) development a functioning leadership team; (b) staff buy-in and participation; (c) administrative support; (d) competent coaching; and

(e) district level support. The district chose CHAMPS behavioral management framework by Randy Sprick to provide the structured form for teachers and staff to teach expectations (Richards et al., 2014). CHAMPS is a proactive and positive approach to classroom management that allow teachers to spend less time disciplining and more time teaching (Sprick, 2009).

Utilizing this model, the district demonstrated success in the beginning stages of PBIS and five pilot campuses consistently reported a decrease in the number of office discipline referrals (Richards et al., 2014). Moreover, the teachers in the study reported that they felt more confident and capable of managing behaviors that once resulted in immediate removal from the classroom (Richards et al., 2014). PBIS implementation should be a consistent and focused approach to relearning how to teach behavior and social skills that are different from traditional models of discipline (Richards et al., 2014). The role of the principal is essential in creating the environment that supports new practices with PBIS (Richards et al., 2014). The principal's ability to build capacity through guiding principles, operating routines, resource supports, data driven decisions, and administrative leadership is critical to the successful implementation of PBIS (Sugai et al., 2010). Likewise, the principals' missions and beliefs were paramount to the successful effective implementation of a new program (Miller, 2012).

PBIS in a Texas School District

Furthermore, Figure 3 highlights an example of overall implementation process of CHAMPS, which was also the PBIS framework in the Texas School District below. In an urban/suburban district of approximately 70,000 students OSS and expulsions were

reduced over the course of a three-year initial implementation of a PBIS CHAMPS framework (Safe & Civil Schools, 2011). There were 74 schools and the demographics of the district at the time of implementation was approximately 22% Asian/Pacific Islander, 29% Black, 27% Hispanic, 19% White, 2% Multi-Racial and 0.45% percent Native American with a 35% economically disadvantaged population (Safe & Civil Schools). As a multicultural school district, the students represented countries from around the world and more than 100 different dialects and languages (Safe & Civil Schools). Implementing the CHAMPS framework into classrooms was a district-wide initiative to help teachers establish clear expectations with logical and fair responses to student misbehavior (Safe & Civil Schools).

CHAMPS—What is it?	Expectations	Resources	Benefits/Outcomes
C---Conversation--Can students talk to each other during the activity? H---Help----------How do students get the teacher's attention? A--- Activity------What is the task/objective? What is the end product? M---Movement---Can students move about during the activity? P---Participation-How do students show they are fully participating? S---Success for all students!	District Level *Annual Trainings *District Trainers * Data-driven *Administrator Liaisons *Annual Assessment Survey *Training Sequences (i.e. Year-one campus)	*CHAMPS book *Teacher Encyclopedia book *Discipline in Secondary Classroom book *COACHING Classroom Management book http://www.safeandcivilschools.com	*Common Language *Framework for PBIS *Research-based *Practical strategies *Effective and proactive classroom management *A plan to TEACH, MONITOR and Provide FEEDBACK (TMF)
S---Structure (organize your classroom to prevent misbehavior) T---Teach (tech expectations for students to be successful within that structure) O---Observe (monitor whether students are meeting expectations) I--- Interact (interact positively with students) C---Correct(misbehavior fluently)	Campus Level *CHAMPS Agreement *CHAMPS Campus Team *CHAMPS Action Plan *CHAMPS campus trainings *CHAMPS campus data *Progress Monitoring	*District Contact *District Trainer *CHAMPS Administrator Liaisons *CHAMPS Campus Team	* Clear expectations for students * Less time monitoring discipline * Motivates students *Students ownership *Less classroom disruptions
*Determine the level of structure for each class *Guidelines for Success---Specific to your campus *CHAMPS Activity Worksheet---Chapter 4 *Classroom Management Plan---Chapter 5 *Ratios of Positive Interactions---Chapter 6 *Motivation---Chapters 7 & 8 *Correcting student misbehavior as an instructional opportunity---Chapter 9	*Ongoing District Support *District Trainers and Administrators Liaisons participate with the collaborative planning of district trainings	Additional Support—Upon Request *Spring CHAMPS Campus training (January Staff Development) *CHAMPS Campus Visit (Detailed Campus Report)	*Discipline referrals are down *Improved school climates *Increased student success

Figure 3. Texas school district implementation example.

CHAMPS positive approach to classroom management assisted campuses and teachers with establishing common goals, guidelines for success, positive expectations, and strategies to motivate students to succeed (Safe & Civil Schools, 2011). CHAMPS is a research-based prevention and intervention discipline management framework that teaches student expectations and focuses on building positive interactions (Sprick, 2009). The district experienced success over a six-year implementation of CHAMPS; the referral numbers decreased (Texas Education Agency (TEA), 2011; TEA, 2012; TEA, 2013; TEA, 2014) and school climates throughout the district improved (Safe & Civil Schools). The number of campuses showing a decrease in discipline referrals increased each year. Seventy-three of the 74 campuses in the district were trained in CHAMPS. Fifty-three campuses showed a decrease in referrals for the 2010-11 school year (Safe & Civil Schools, 2011; TEA, 2014). In addition, the number of in-school and OSS decreased at every level (elementary, middle and high school) and within the four sub populations (African American, Asian, Hispanic and White) during the 2010-11 school year (TEA, 2014). In Figure 4, the total number of discipline referrals decreased by 22% from the 2007-08 school year to the 2013-14 school year (Safe & Civil Schools; TEA, 2009; TEA, 2010; TEA 2011; TEA, 2012; TEA, 2013; & TEA, 2014).

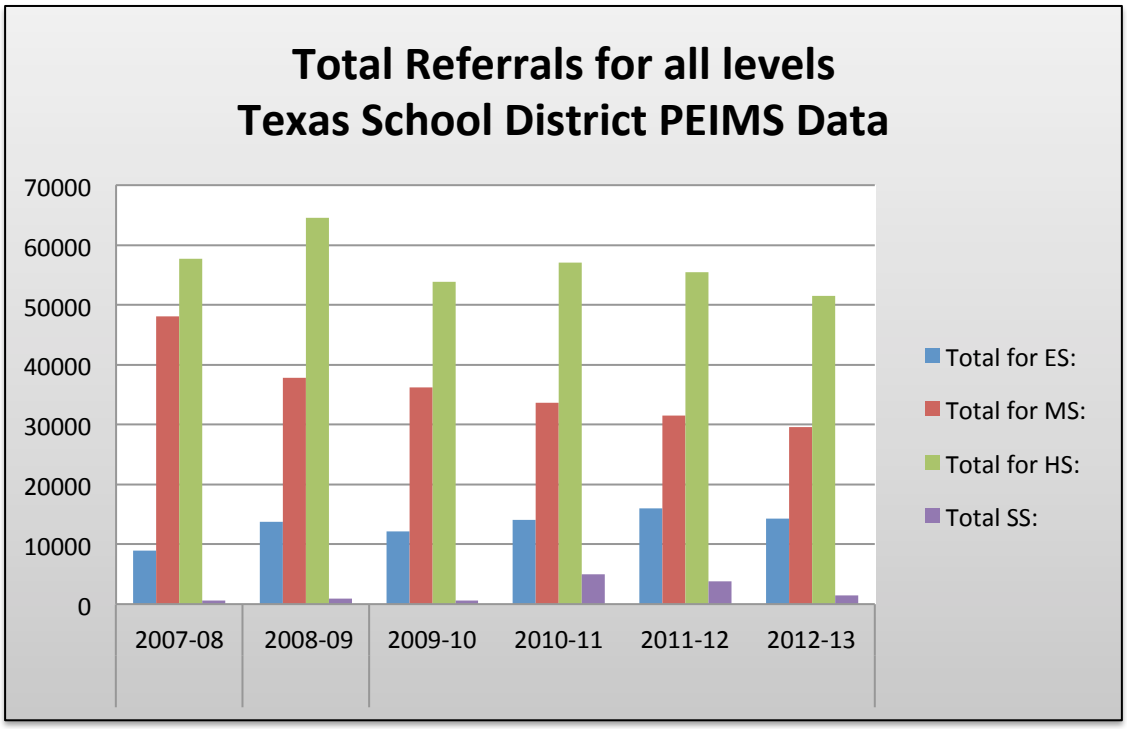

Figure 4. Total referrals for all grade levels. (Adapted from Safe& Civil Schools 2011 report.)

Likewise, the total number of students suspended in school decreased from 9,976 in the 2007-08 to 6,931 in the 2013-14 school year; a 31% decrease. Figure 5 highlights the decreased that occurred within every sub population: (a) African Americans decreased by 60%, (b) Asians by 74%, (c) Hispanics by 66%, and (d) Whites by 68% (Safe & Civil Schools, 2010; TEA, 2009; TEA, 2010; TEA 2011; TEA, 2012; TEA, 2013; & TEA, 2014).

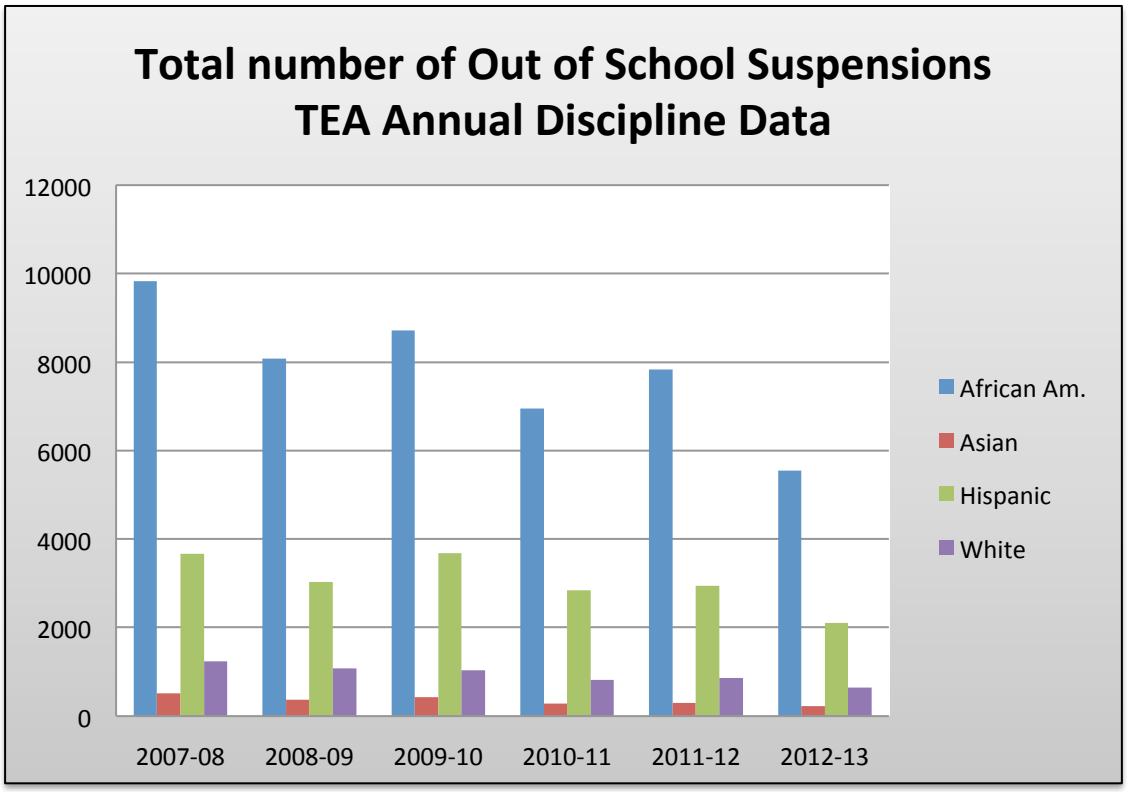

Figure 5. Total number of OSS by subpopulations.
(Adapted from Safe& Civil Schools 2011 report.)

Moreover, the total number of discretionary DAEP placements decreased from 1,676 in 2007-08 to 453 (73% reduction in placements) in the 2013-14 school year. Figure 6 showed the decreased by sub population: (a) African Americans decreased by 60%, (b) Asians by 74%, (c) Hispanics by 66%, and Whites by 68% (Safe & Civil Schools, 2010; TEA, 2009; TEA, 2010; TEA 2011; TEA, 2012; TEA, 2013; & TEA, 2014). Furthermore, the total number of District Alternative Education Placement (DAEP) placements district-wide decreased tremendously in all but one sub-population over a five-year implementation of CHAMPS as illustrated in Figure 6. African-American students showed a decreased from 1,184 in 2008-09 to 446 in 2012-13 school

year (63%); Hispanic students DAEP placements decreased from 627 to 246 (61%); and Whites showed a decreased from 261 to 71 a 73% reduction (Safe & Civil Schools, 2011; TEA, 2011; TEA, 2012; TEA, 2013; TEA, 2014). Asian students increased from 0 to 31 (Safe & Civil Schools & TEA). African-American student expulsions showed a steady decrease in OSS and expulsions (Safe & Civil Schools & TEA 2011; TEA, 2012; TEA, 2013; TEA, 2014).

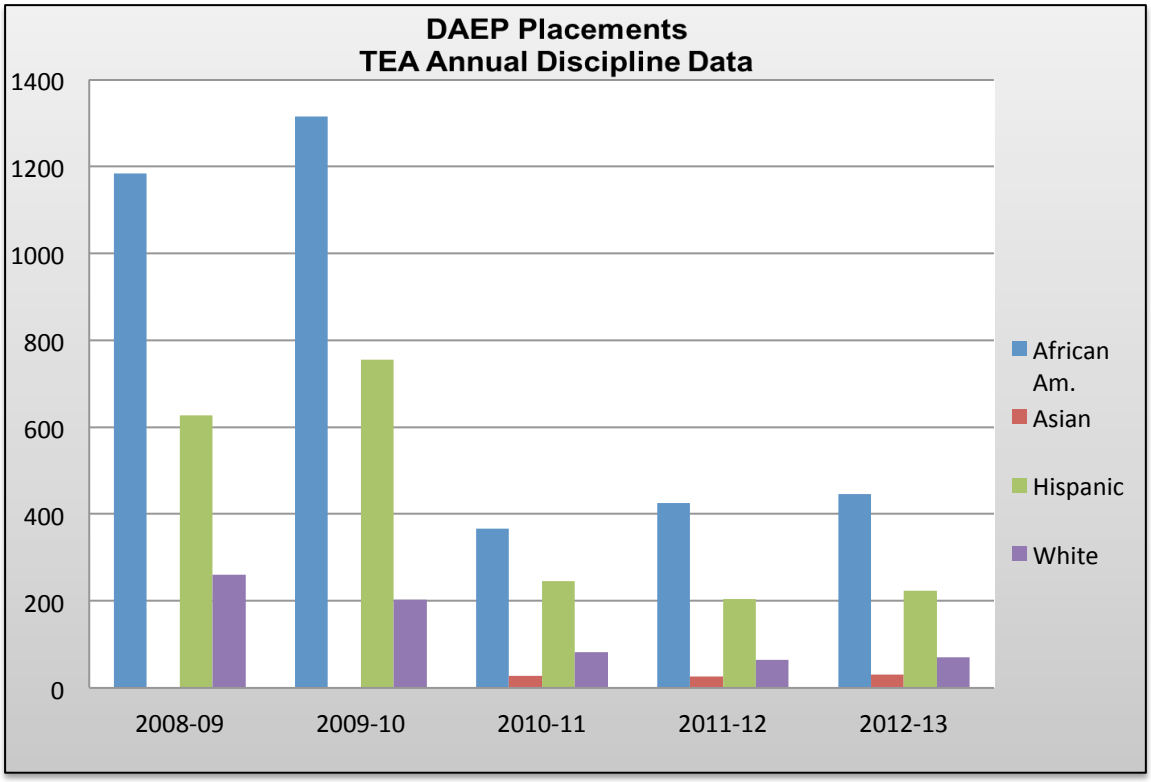

Figure 6. Total DAEP placements by subpopulations. (Adapted from Safe& Civil Schools 2011 report.)

While the district highlighted in Figure 6 made substantial progress in reducing African-American students OSS and expulsions, disproportionality was still prevalent.

According to Skiba et al. (2014), PBIS frameworks typical do not address racial disparities and some researchers (Losen & Gillespie, 2012) are calling for a revised model that include cultural considerations. The author discussed in the article how schools across Virginia held formal PBIS training that included identifying each racial group and associating the group with appropriate discipline protocols as part of the implementation guidelines for long-term sustainability proved to be an effective strategy for reducing suspensions with students of color in schools across the district (Skiba et al., 2014).

Culturally Responsive Instructional Leadership (CRIL)

Although there have been great efforts to attack the inequities that exist within the educational system, African-American students are still coming up short and being locked out of a high quality education. National trends indicate that students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and students identified with a special education disability have a higher probability of being excluded from general education classrooms because of disciplinary practices (Klingner, Artiles, Kozleski, Harry, Zion, Tate, Duran, & Riley, 2005). It is important to consider personal characteristics, cultural experiences and events in the individual student's life that may affect learning (Goss, 2015). In this section of the review of literature, several key components of effective CRIL are discussed including: (a) culturally relevant pedagogy, (b) culturally responsive teaching, (c) diversity and social justice, and (d) culturally responsive classroom management.

Bestowing cultural responsiveness as a conceptual lens could foreground the role of building relationships and getting to know the students. A culturally responsive approach to education is grounded in the belief that all students can excel in academic endeavors when their culture, language, heritage, and experiences are valued and used to facilitate their learning and development (Klingner et al., 2005). Culturally responsive practices emerged from the body of research on Multicultural Cultural education (Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015). According to the NASP (2010), students' cultural knowledge, experiences, and performance styles are used to facilitate their educational experiences through the careful, critical reconsideration of how we conceptualize learning and performance. Culturally responsive educators respect and value the cultural differences of students, families, communities, and colleagues. The journey toward cultural competence requires a willingness to experience, learn from the experiences, and act on the experiences (Hanley, 1999).

Hanley and Noblit (2009) proposes that when schools work under the assumption that students would be served best if they give up their culture in school, they negate the students' cultures; therefore, denying the students the key resource that they bring to education. Regarding culture as a set of tools, perspectives, and capabilities can deploy the pursuit of learning in students (Akom, 2008). When these tools, perspectives, and capabilities are suppressed or denied, students are educationally disempowered (Akom). Students find it hard to use their culture to learn (Akom). Being culturally responsive means negotiating new standards and practices that acknowledge the differences and similarities among all student groups so that the cultural heritage, contributions, and

strengths of all members of school communities are acknowledged and valued (Gregory & Mosley, 2004). Partnering with the community to promote CRIL will increase community involvement and potentially reduce disproportionality of African-American students in school discipline (Haight, Gibson, Kayama, & Wilson, 2014; Goss, 2015). CRIL will ensure that African-American students achieve academically despite the systemic inequities, maintain some culturally integrity versus forced assimilation into the dominant culture, and be able to engage and critically analyze society (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Providing regular trainings and support for cultural responsive practices to all school personnel on how to engage African-American students and incorporating culturally relevant pedagogy into the curriculum would be a positive course to change the academic and school discipline gaps (Losen, 2015; Boneshefski & Runge, 2014; Skiba et al., 2014; Vincent et al., 2011; Losen, 2013). Culturally relevant pedagogy that includes cultural competence, social justice, curriculum reform, teacher training, and an activism program can deepen and expand teacher-student relationships (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Hanley & Noblit, 2009; NASP, 2010). School leaders should work collaboratively with students, families, and the community to build the organizational structures that promote opportunity for reflective feedback with practitioners (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Hanley & Noblit, 2009; NASP, 2010). Ensuring equity with resources and addressing structural inequity such as culturally competent educators in schools are critical challenges that CRIL address and provide best practices (Lason-Billings, 2009). Also,

CRIL should utilize the funds of knowledge students bring to the school and utilize case studies to give voice to the contributions of family members, the community, and popular media (Ladson-Billings).

Likewise, Ladson-Billings' (2009) work on culturally relevant pedagogy in the book "The Dreamkeepers" (2009) is an excellent research-based resource for CRIL. Incorporating culturally relevant methods to see teaching as an art, rather than as a technical skill, will promote culturally responsiveness from the classroom level. According to Ladson-Billings (2009), culturally relevant pedagogy of successful teachers included three things: (a) academic achievement or student learning; (b) cultural competency; and (c) critical consciousness. CRIL will ensure that African-American students achieve academically despite the systemic inequities, maintain some culturally integrity versus forced assimilation into the dominant culture, and be able to engage and critically analyze society (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Also, CRIL should allow time for teachers to have reflective feedback as they continue to develop their teaching skills (Ladson-Billings).

CRIL recognizes that teachers with culturally relevant practices have high self-esteem and high regard for others (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Creating a profile of the characteristics of culturally responsive teachers for hire should be a top priority for administrators (Ladson-Billings). CRIL should see the staff as part of the community, see teaching as giving back to the community, and encourage their students to do the same (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Ladson-Billings (2009) proposes that teachers with culturally relevant practices believe that all students can succeed and the teachers should

be committed to digging knowledge out of students. CRIL should promote teaching practices that help students make connections with their learning (Ladson-Billings).

Ladson-Billings (2009) was interested in why a certain kind of teaching helped African-American students to be more successful academically. She wanted to know how the teaching supported students and encouraged them to use their prior knowledge to make sense of the world (Ladson-Billings, 2009). She discussed culturally relevant teaching as a pedagogy that empowers students. Ladson-Billings'(2009) effective teaching practices for African-American students is based on a three-year study of highly effective teachers. This model could serve as a framework for CRIL to implement into teacher preparation programs and professional development trainings. CRIL have a role to play in speaking out against the status quo. Ladson-Billings suggest the *We are family* approach is needed for culturally relevant teaching with African-American students. Every generation has a task and CRIL have to be empowered to take action against tough issues that disenfranchise African-American students (Ladson-Billings). Ladson-Billings' study of successful teachers of African American students identified excellent ways of teaching culturally relevant pedagogy that can become part of education classes to help all teachers to become more effective teachers.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Teachers need to be aware and acknowledge their own cultural socialization and reflect on how their beliefs and decisions can create and sustain forms of inequity with African-American students such as the discipline gap highlighted earlier (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Sullivan & A'Vant, 2009). Also, teachers should possess knowledge of

the students' cultural backgrounds to create a culture of respect in which everyone treats each other with dignity and fairness(Monore, 2009; Terrell & Lindsey, 2009). Cramer and Bennett (2015) propose that teachers set the tone as the leader of the classroom, and all opinions in the class should be valued and acknowledged. Classroom social relations and the role of the teacher should move from authority figure of the teacher being all-knowing to a fluid system of connectedness with all students (Ladson-Billings, 2009). The author suggests it is the way we teach that has the most powerful impact on students more than the curriculum taught (Ladson-Billings).

Gay (2013) described cultural responsive teaching as a means for improving achievement by teaching diverse students through their own cultural filters. The author suggested that a very different pedagogical paradigm is needed to improve the performance of underachieving students from various ethnic groups (Gay, 2013). The change should be one that teaches to and through the personal and cultural strengths of students, their intellectual capabilities, and their prior accomplishments (Gay). Culturally responsive teaching is accessing the internal strength of ethnically diverse students and communities, and using it to improve their personal agency and educational achievement (Gay, 2013). CRIL that utilizes this approach would lead to more positive learning outcomes for African American students.

In Delpit's (2006) book, *Other People's Children's*, she discussed the adversity facing people of color through the stories of participants. The author captures the essence of the power of culture and discusses the inequality it creates in education (Delpit, 2006). Assumptions and stereotypes can lead to irrelevant pedagogy and student

boredom with class (Delpit). CRIL should recognize the power structures as related to equity in education for African American students (Friere, 2010). In the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* the discussion of a person's humanity being stolen is depiction of how African-American students are sometimes forced to fit into the dominant culture (Friere). CRIL seek opportunities to challenge the structural inequities that negatively impact African-American students and replace them with programs that promote equity and a sense of legitimacy with African-American students (Solomon & Sekayi, 2007).

Diversity and Social Justice

Marshall and Oliva's (2010) distinctions between a good leader and a social justice leader is a worthy goal for CRIL. The authors express that a good leader works with the public to connect with the community and will speak of success for all children (Marshall & Oliva, 2010). Conversely, the social justice leader places significant value on diversity and deeply learns about and understands diversity and cultural respect (Marshall & Oliva). CRIL should demonstrate a passion for diversity and social justice to raise visibility of social justice issues to empower African-American students and promote effective practices in schools (Marshall & Oliva). CRIL encourages others to participate with diversity awareness to create an environment of courageous conversations to improve learning environments for all students. Becoming skilled and experienced with including culturally relevant pedagogy into the curriculum to promote long-term commitments to positive educational outcomes for African-American students should also be the goal for CRIL (Marshall & Oliva).

The universal notion that something needs to be done to address diversity and

social justice issues are well documented (Marshall & Oliva, 2010). However, few people are willing to take action in order to make diversity and social justice an integral part of providing a quality and equitable education to all students (Marshall & Oliva). Talking and walking the walk with social justice are mandatory (Marshall & Oliva). CRIL should have words and actions that match. Building capacity to support the learning of all children is crucial to student success (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Implementing diversity and social justice student leadership programs targeting African-American students is another layer of CRIL that improve educational opportunities. Preparing social justice leaders can be difficult; however, staying the course will provide an opportunity to continuously build coalitions and support for the programs (Marshall & Oliva).

As the population continues to grow and change, CRIL need to form alliances in the community as well as work with the staff to make continuous improvement across all student groups. For example, there is a sense of urgency for African-American males (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). According to the 2011-12 OCR school data report, African-American boys had the highest rate of OSS at 20% compared to 6% for White boys (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). While boys and girls each represent about half of the student population, boys represented nearly three out of four of students suspended multiple times and expelled (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). With the less than 53% graduation rate and increasing number of African American males entering the pipeline to prison, CRIL need a deliberate focus to change the current trend for African-American male students (The Schott Foundation for Public Education,

2012).

Culturally Responsive Classroom Management

The failure to provide culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive practices can contribute to the disproportionality in school discipline with African-American students (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education, 2008). CRIL should include a framework for providing culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM) through out schools. CRCM is a method of operating classrooms with all children in a culturally responsive way (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education). CRCM seeks to provide "all students with equitable opportunities for learning" (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education, p.2) by minimizing discriminatory school discipline practices that occur when the behaviors of non-dominate populations are misinterpreted. Culturally responsive pedagogy and culturally relevant teaching are prerequisites of CRCM (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education).

Teachers not only need to be aware of their biases but own them, despite their subtle, and almost invisible natures (Cramer & Bennett, 2015). They must acknowledge any negative thoughts that they have as well as preclude them from influencing their actions (Cramer & Bennett, 2015). Teachers' beliefs about their students will influence student performance (Good & Nichols, 2001). Connecting theory to practice could prove to be an effective strategy for CRIL to get teachers involved with professional development training. CRCM encourage teachers to articulate and examine the values implicit in the western, White, middle-class orientation of U.S. schools, such as the emphasis on individual achievement, independence, and efficiency (Metropolitan Center

for Urban Education, 2008). CRCM is a pedagogical approach that guides the management decisions that teachers make (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education). It is a natural extension of culturally responsive teaching, which uses students' backgrounds, rendering of social experiences, prior knowledge, and learning styles in daily lessons (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education).

According to Martin and Sugarman (1993), classroom management refers to the activities of classroom teachers that create a positive classroom climate within which effective teaching and learning can occur. The Metropolitan Center for Urban Education proposes that positive classroom management starts with a proactive approach to order in the classroom (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education, 2008). The CRCM process include the following techniques: (a) monitor your discourse style; (b) clarify expectations; (c) be sensitive to how diverse cultures deal with conflict; and (d) emphasize a positive environment (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education). The goal of CRCM is to create an environment in which students behave appropriately from a sense of personal responsibility (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education). Therefore, teachers, as culturally responsive classroom managers, should recognize their biases and values. They should reflect on the influence of their expectations for behavior and their interactions with students and how it impacts learning (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education).

Findings in the research literature suggest that differential expectations between the home and school lives of culturally diverse students may contribute to disciplinary disproportionality (Raffaele & Knoff, 2003). The adage, perception is in the eye of the

beholder and perception is a reality, holds true in classrooms throughout the nation. The perceptions of the classroom environment from both the teacher and student are equally impactful on the way in which the classroom meets the needs of the student (Klingner et al.). Hence, educators must provide supportive environments, build positive relationships, and encourage active engagement to meet the individual needs of all students (Klingner et al.). CRIL promotes CRCM and highlights the importance of teacher teaching their expectations to students.

Summary

This chapter included a systematic review of the literature surrounding disproportionality in school discipline of African-American students, the disparities associated with the disproportionality of OSS and expulsions of African-American students, and PBIS with CRIL as an effective approach to addressing the disproportionality. An overwhelming amount of school data on schools throughout the country demonstrates a pattern of inequality along racial lines (U. S. Department of Education, 2014; Losen; 2015; Losen, 2013; Fabelo et.al, 2011; Skiba et al., 2014; Skiba, Horner, Chung, Rausch, May, & Tobin, 2011; Skiba et. al., 2011; Skiba, et al., 2002; Children's Defense Fund, 1975). The Department of Education's OCR data were highlighted and discussed in this review. Reference was made to the landmark case, *Brown v. Board of Education*, which changed the racial inequality law separate but equal; however, equity issues still exist. The purpose of this review was to discuss research on disproportionality of African-American students with OSS and expulsions,

the implementation of PBIS and CRIL in response to the disparities from the perceptive of school principals. In the next chapter, I present the research methods for this study.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

The methods utilized within this research study are explained in this chapter. The purpose of the study was threefold. First, I determined the extent of PBIS implementation in large Texas high schools with low rates of OSS or expulsions of African-American students. Second, I explored school leaders' perceptions on the effective implementation of PBIS and CRIL in 5A and 6A Texas high schools with low suspension rates among African-American students. Finally, I explored school leaders' perceptions of OSS and expulsions of African-American students in relation to PBIS. Large Texas high schools implementing PBIS with a 16% to 33% African-American student enrollment and low rates of OSS and expulsions of African-American students were targeted to participate.

Research Design

Recognizing that systemic disparities are evident by race and that the long-lasting trend that African-American students are three times more likely than White students to be suspended or expelled from school presented a compelling argument for the need of more research proven strategies to address the problem (U. S. Department of Education, 2014). Disproportionality of African-American students in OSS and expulsions is a well-documented phenomenon (Skiba et al., 2014; Losen, 2015; Butler et al., 2012). There is a need to move beyond the extensive documentation to an exploration of the phenomenon. The philosophy of phenomenology is on the experience and how to transfer the experience into the known (Merriam, 2009). "Phenomenology is a study of

people's conscious experience of their life-word" (Merriam, p. 25). Therefore, I conducted a phenomenological qualitative study on the school leaders' perceptions of effective implementation of a PBIS framework with CRIL and reducing OSS and expulsions of African-American students at several Texas high schools. I desired to uncover the essence of the core meanings of the experiences from the school leaders by grouping, analyzing, and comparing the individual responses to the online questionnaire and semi-structured interviews (Merriam).

According to Creswell (2009), a phenomenological qualitative research study allows a researcher to ask open-ended questions while gathering information from interviews, observations, and document analysis to better understand a phenomenon, theme, pattern, or interpretation. The research design included an online questionnaire protocol for the selected participants. The questionnaire survey protocol was given to collect participant information such as race, gender, years of experience in the field, PBIS and CRIL training information. Also, the OSEP Technical Assistance Center for PBIS and Dr. Randy Sprick's Safe and Civil Schools Teacher Development System resources were utilized to develop the online questionnaire rating for determining PBIS implementation at the targeted Texas high schools. A coding system was applied to discuss all information pertaining to the high schools. The targeted sample size for the semi-structured interviews with the principals was ten participants. Data collection was conducted during the fall of 2016 and spring of 2017. The 2011-12 OCR school data and Texas Education Agency (TEA) enrollment data were analyzed to generate a profile of

the five high schools. Qualitative researchers commonly gather multiple forms of data for analysis (Creswell, 2007).

Research Questions

In order to discover the relationship between the PBIS framework and CRIL to the disproportionality of African-American students in OSS and expulsions, this study was guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent is PBIS implemented in schools with low rates of OSS or expulsions of African-American students?

2. What are the school leaders' perceptions on effective implementation of PBIS?

3. How do the school leaders' perceive OSS and expulsions of African-American students in relation to PBIS?

4. To what extent is CRIL included the implementation of PBIS?

Context

Utilizing the pre-existing OCR 2011-12 school data and TEA enrollment data, 54 Texas 5A and 6A high schools met the stated criteria. The principals were contacted to complete an anonymous online questionnaire. The principals were requested to complete the online questionnaire to gather preliminary information about the campus level PBIS implementation. This information was used to select the top ten scoring high schools for the semi-structured recorded interviews with the principals. Ten of the 54 high school principals completed the online questionnaire. Four attempts were made via e-mail and three attempts via the telephone to increase the number of participating schools.

Unfortunately, some school district policies prohibited principals from responding to the anonymous online questionnaire.

Adhering to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements for this study, the ten schools that completed the online questionnaire were targeted to complete the semi-structured recorded interviews. After repeated unsuccessful attempts to get consent for ten principals to participate, I proceeded with the study and interviewed five principals, one associate principal, and an assistant principal. It is also noteworthy, that the associate principal and assistant principal were present with the principal of a Senior High School campus that share a Ninth Grade High School campus. TEA PEIMS data list the two campuses as one school. Hence, the total of seven participants signed consent for the semi-structured recorded interviews, which included the five campus principals plus the associate principal, and an assistant principal of the Senior High School campus. The semi-structured recorded interviews took place on the high school campuses. A suitable site is a critical decision in qualitative research; therefore, the campus site was the ideal setting for this phase of the study (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993). I was able to see and experience the campus environment as I walked through the hallways interacting with students and staff on my way to meet the principals. I observed visible signs of PBIS and the schools' culture at each of the five schools.

Likewise, TEA enrollment data was used to identify the large Texas high schools with a 16% to 33% African-American student enrollment. Upon generating the list of high schools, I utilized the TEA enrollment data and OCR school data to create a

spreadsheet matrix of the identified schools' discipline for the 2011-12. The desired results were for these schools to contribute best practice procedures for PBIS with CRIL to the field of education. Optimally, leading to a PBIS-CRIL framework model for policy recommendations to guide school, district, state, and federal level education programs for reducing disproportionality of African-American students with OSS and expulsions.

Population and Sample

As the study's primary units of analysis were the school leaders who directly influenced the implementation of PBIS, purposive sampling was used to select participants based on the campus 2011-12 OCR school discipline data, TEA enrollment of African-American students, and implementation of PBIS. The University Interscholastic League (UIL) 5A and 6A Texas high schools from the 2012-2014 list was utilized to target the population sample. UIL organizes public high schools into conferences according to enrollment size for equitable competition on a statewide basis (Goodman, 1985). There are six conferences; 6A, 5A, 4A, 3A, 2A and 1A. Texas 4A high schools had a student enrollment of 1005 to 2089 and 5A high schools had a student enrollment of 2090 or higher in 2012-2014; however, the changes made in 2013 added the 6A conference group as schools with 2150 and higher student enrollment and changed 5A conference group to 1100--2149 student enrollment (Watson, 2013). Pointing out the UIL change to add the 6A conference is an important factor for readers to note for comparing Texas high schools data in the following chapters. Some high schools moved from 5A to 6A and some 4A to 5A; therefore, resulting in some high

schools being listed in two different conferences for the TEA 2011-12 and 2013-14 enrollment data.

In Figure 7 the population selection process is outlined. Texas 5A and 6A schools were considered large high schools in this study. Purposive sampling was used to select the Texas 5A and 6A high schools. Purposive sampling will promote discovery, understanding, and insight to how the campuses achieve the low OSS or expulsion rates for African-American students (Merriam, 2009). Specifically, campuses with low OSS or expulsions of African-American students according to the 2011-12 OCR school data were targeted to complete the online questionnaire. Low rates of OSS in this study were African-American student populations with OSS rates less than 10% above the African-American student enrollment rate. Likewise, low rates of expulsions in this study were equal to or lower than the African-American student enrollment rate. Furthermore, schools implementing a PBIS framework through Region IV PBIS Technical Assistance Center or other PBIS frameworks had a rating component on the online questionnaire; however, no participants in this study were utilizing the OSEP Technical Assistance Center on PBIS. Taking advantage of the pbis.org website resources, I contacted the Texas State PBIS Coordinator to request a list of high schools who were successfully implementing PBIS in Texas as evidenced by the Benchmarks of Quality assessment. I was informed that no list of Technical Assistance PBIS schools exist and that the center was not collecting that type of data.

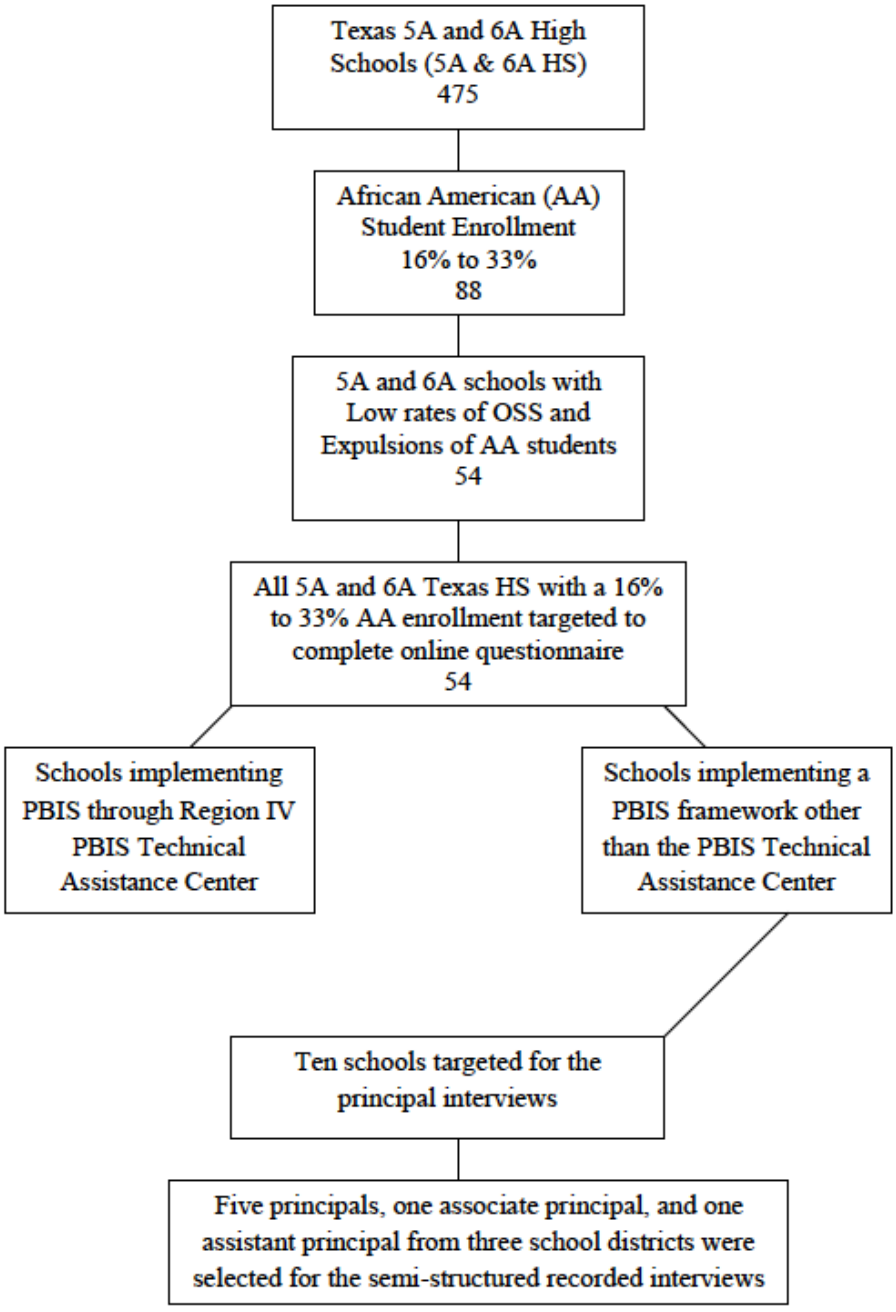

Figure 7. Population selection process.

Instrumentation

An anonymous online questionnaire was utilized to gather background information on the principals and information about the schools' PBIS and CRIL implementations. In Table 2, the online survey questions for the principals are highlighted. The responses to the online questionnaire were rated in two categories: (a) PBIS schools with the Technical Assistance Center with a school rating from the Benchmarks of Quality assessment; and (b) PBIS schools implementing a framework other than the Technical Assistance Center or Technical Assistance schools with no Benchmarks of Quality assessment rating. If the high schools in this study were Technical Assistance Center PBIS campuses, the schools would complete the Benchmark of Quality assessment rating in the spring of each year. The critical elements of the Benchmarks of Quality assessment include: (a) lesson plans for teaching expectations and rules; (b) an implementation plan; (c) classroom systems; (d) evaluations for both students and staff; (e) PBIS Team; (f) faculty commitment; (g) effective procedures for dealing with discipline; (h) a data entry and analysis plan; (i) and rules; and (j) a reward and recognition program. (OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2015). A score of a 75% or higher fidelity rating was the target score for the PBIS schools through Region IV; however, the ten principals all responded "No" to question #6 regarding the campus being a Technical Assistance Center PBIS school on the online questionnaire.

Table 2.

Online Questionnaire Protocol

Questions
Online Questionnaire rating
1. Race _____
2. Gender_____
3. How many years have you been the Principal?_____ Teacher?_____ Subject(s) _____
4. How many years have you been at this campus? _____
5. What Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework does your campus use?_____
6. If your campus goes through OSEP Technical Assistance Center on PBIS, have you completed the School-wide Benchmarks of Quality rating from your Regional Education Center? _____ What is your campus rating? _____
7. How many years of PBIS training has your campus received?_____ (2 or more years 2pts.)
8. Do you have a PBIS team? _____ If so, who is on the team and how often do they meet?_____ (2pts for a team, 5pts for team and meet at least monthly)
9. Who is responsible for coordinating the PBIS effort at your campus?
10. When did you first provide PBIS training at your campus?
11. How often is PBIS training provided since the initial training? (3pts. if at least annual)
12. Who delivers the PBIS training at your campus? (Person's Title)
13. What are your school-wide expectations or guidelines for success? (5pts if 3 to 5 are expectations or guidelines are named)
14. How do you provide Cultural Responsive Instructional Leadership at your campus (CRIL)? _____ The definition for CRIL will be provided. (5pts if 3 to 5 CRIL strategies are named)
15. What culturally responsive training does your staff receive? _____How many years? _____ (2pts for training and 3pts for 2 or more years of culturally responsive staff training)
*Non Technical Assistance Center PBIS campuses' total score from numbers 7, 8, 11, 13, 14 and 15 will be added and multiplied by 4 to get the total score.

Nonetheless, the ten high schools campuses that completed the online questionnaire had a rating score between 8 and 92 on a 100-point scale. The rating score on the online questionnaire were calculated by adding the points from question numbers 7, 8, 11, 13, 14 and 15 and multiplying by 4 as indicated in Table 2. The content from the six questions listed above were the most relevant information for this study; therefore, the schools were targeted for the semi-structured recorded interviews. In Table 3, the ten principals' responses to the six questions and the rating scores are listed. Pseudonyms were utilized for the participants and the campuses.

The online questionnaire protocol was different from the Benchmark of Quality assessment rating in that CRIL was assessed.

Table 3.
Online Questionnaire Protocol Responses

Questions Number			7	8	11	13	14	15	
	F/M	Race							Total
Participant One	F	B	2	5	3	0	0	0	40
Participant Two	F	W	2	5	3	5	0	5	80
Participant Three	M	B	2	5	3	5	5	3	92
Participant Four	M	B	2	0	3	0	0	5	40
Participant Five	F	W	2	5	3	5	3	0	72
Participant Six	M	B	2	5	3	5	5	2	88
Participant Seven	M	W	0	0	3	0	0	0	12
Participant Eight	M	W	0	0	0	2	0	0	8
Participant Nine	M	W	0	0	0	5	0	0	20
Participant Ten	M	B	0	0	3	0	5	5	52

Deviating somewhat from the Benchmark Quality assessment, a score of 60% of higher was the target score for the online questionnaire. Unlike, the Benchmark Quality assessment rating, the researcher did not examine any teacher related areas only the school leaders' perception of PBIS and CRIL implementation. The areas most significant to OSS and expulsions were closely examined for this study. The online questionnaire was utilized to determine the high schools' level of PBIS and CRIL implementation. In Table 4, the four levels of implementation are listed: (a) a zero score is undetermined or not implemented, (b) 5-59 is low level implementation, (c) 60-85 is medium level implementation, and (d) 86-100 is high level implementation. In Table 3, the results from the online questionnaire indicated that the ten schools were implementing some form of PBIS and CRIL framework. According to the online questionnaire scoring rubric, two high schools scored high level PBIS and CRIL implementation, two high schools scored medium level, and the remaining six high schools scored low level implementation.

Table 4.

Online Questionnaire Scoring

0	=	Undetermined or Not Implemented
5---59	=	Low Level Implementation
60--85	=	Medium Level Implementation
86—100	=	High Level Implementation

In Table 5, the self-created, open-ended, semi-structured question protocol based on the research questions is listed below to provide authentication of the instrument employed to survey the ten principals. The measurement instrument should be valid and reliable (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008); therefore, I piloted the measurement instrument through face validity. Four principals, not participants with this study, completed a test run of the online questionnaire and semi-structured recorded interview protocols to ensure that the instruments were clear, easy to interrupt, and had an appropriate time frame for completing the interview. The use of an open-ended protocol allowed me to give every participant an opportunity to provide individual feedback in the study. Also, the use of the recorded interviews afforded the time to fact check. I reviewed participants' responses multiple times to ensure accuracy with the data.

Table 5.

Semi-Structured Interview Question Protocol

Questions
Structured face-to-face Interview
1. Discuss what happens at your campus with PBIS implementation?
2. What are the non-negotiables with PBIS?
3. What is your role or responsibilities for effective implementing PBIS at your school?
4. How is CRIL included in your campus PBIS framework?
5. How do administrators provide support for PBIS and CRIL?
6. What area of the PBIS framework is support needed? How does CRIL fit into needed support for PBIS?
7. How did your campus achieve low rates of OSS and expulsions with African American students?
8. What role did PBIS and CRIL play in reducing the rates of OSS and expulsions with African American students?
9. What advice would you provide to other high schools implementing PBIS with CRIL?
10. What if any barriers have you encountered while implementing PBIS? CRIL?
11. How does your race play a role in implementing PBIS?
12. How does your race play a role in implementing CRIL?
13. What percentage of teachers in your building are effectively implementing PBIS?
14. What percentage of teachers in your building are effectively implementing cultural responsive practices?
15. How are the teachers implementing PBIS and cultural responsive practices?
16. What would you add or do differently if given the opportunity to start over with PBIS and CRIL implementation?
17. If a PBIS/CRIL expert conducted a campus site visit, what would they see?

Data Collection

In June 2016, I contacted TEA Research and Analysis Division and requested a list of all Texas high schools with a total enrollment of 1005 students or higher with the number of African-American student enrollment for the 2011-12 school year. First, I applied the 16% to 33% African American criteria to the 475 Texas high schools on the list and 88 Texas high schools matched the total student enrollment and percentage of African-American student population criteria. Second, I utilized the UIL categories of 5A and 6A high schools to describe large Texas high schools for this study. Third, I analyzed the 2011-12 OCR school data to identify the 54 large Texas high schools with low OSS or expulsions rates of African-American students. Finally, I submitted a request for IRB approval for this study.

The IRB application request included: (a) approval to conduct a four to seven minutes online questionnaire in SurveyMonkey with the 54 principals; and (b) approval to conduct 10 semi-structured recorded interviews of the principals from the group of completed online questionnaires. The recruitment phase was difficult and required several updates from the IRB for a new target window for the semi-structured interviews. The IRB required at least one site approval letter before any online questionnaires could be conducted. I targeted several school districts with multiple schools on the list anticipating that perhaps one of the schools would be targeted for the semi-structured recorded interviews. Meanwhile, I visited each of the 54 schools' websites to generate a spreadsheet with the principals' name, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers.

On September 1, 2016, I received the first school district site approval letter and was able to conduct the online questionnaire. After conducting four test runs of the online questionnaire, I sent the recruitment e-mail and online questionnaire information sheet with the SurveyMonkey link to the 54 principals. There was only one response that week so I sent a second request and received no additional responses. I utilized the IRB approved recruitment phone message to contact the principals and two principals whom I have a preexisting relationship with completed the survey. Also, during the phone contacts I discovered that in many cases the SurveyMonkey e-mail was going directly to the principals' spam mail.

Realizing the problem with the SurveyMonkey, on September 21, 2016, I e-mailed each of the 51 remaining principals individually from my g-mail account and made the second follow-up call using the approved IRB phone recruitment message. I received one additional response to the online questionnaire bringing the total to four. Meanwhile, my site approval letter was scheduled to expire on September 30, 2016, so I requested an extension. The site approval was extended to December 2016; therefore, I contacted the three school principals in that district requesting their consent to the semi-structured recorded interviews and the three principals agreed. In January 2017, I updated the recruitment window with the IRB and my Chair, Dr. Beverly Irby, assisted me with the recruitment phase by sending the recruitment e-mail to the other 50 principals. Six additional principals completed the online questionnaire between January 23, 2017, and April 6, 2017. On February 15, 2017, I received the second school district site approval level and the last school district site approval level on March 10, 2017.

Receiving school district site approval was a major challenge to overcome to conduct this research and proved to be a time cumbersome task. One school district required me to make changes to the how the principals were recruited in the district. The requirements made it impossible for me to have any direct contact with the principals via e-mail or phone calls. The troubling requirement resulted in two missed opportunities to connect with principals who agreed to consent on the online format that the district required; however, due to district timeline and no contact policy I could not follow up with the two principals.

Likewise, another unforeseen challenge existed with the school district that had two high schools with both campuses housing over 1005 students. The district requested that both principals, and an assistant principals working with the PBIS framework participate with the interview because TEA see the two schools as one campus. I consulted with my Chair, Dr. Irby, and we both agreed that the additional administrators would provide a more comprehensive perceptive for both campuses since TEA has the two schools listed as one campus. Therefore, one school site had multiple participants versus having only the principal in which each of the participants were highlighted individually as well as the collective perspective for the school.

Five of the ten principals who completed the online questionnaire, one associate principal, and one assistant principal participated with the 19-72 minutes semi-structured recorded interviews. All of the interviews were recorded and transcribed. Member check was performed during the recorded interviews, allowing the interviewee the opportunity to check for accuracy with the interpreted qualitative findings (Creswell, 2009).

Technology problems with the first semi-structured interview resulted in the interview not being recorded. A follow-up recorded interview lasting 19 minutes was conducted with participant one for memory check and to ensure accurate recording.

Furthermore, the semi-structured recorded interview with multiple participants at Victory high school was the longest interview lasting 72 minutes. Participants answered each question openly and appeared to be candid even when speaking about challenges or problem areas within the schools. The principals were passionate about certain topics. In addition to the semi-structured questions, there were some unstructured questions added by the researcher for clarity or inquiry purposes.

Data Analysis

The participants' responses to the semi-structured and unstructured questions were transcribed into 24 pages of single-spaced data. The transcriptions were examined and summarized into a 54-page unit points document. I manually entered the information into the Microsoft note coding system, in which I organized the data by assigning a word or phrases describing the interviewees' responses. Using a color-coding system, I sorted the data into nine themes, three sub-category themes, and a miscellaneous section. Analysis and comparison of the interview sources at each school site was done first in order to answer the primary research question. The 54 page unitized transcribed document was used to set up the note cards. Each recorded interview took approximately two to four hours to transcribe and fact check the written information. One hundred and ninety-one note cards were analyzed and sorted into categories. Reviewing and member checking the documents, analyzing the data, setting up the units, and sorting the note

cards required a continuous focal point on the research questions for identifying patterns to group similar information.

Validity

The online questionnaire and interview protocol were validated through four trial runs of the questionnaire and face validity with the interview protocol with principals not participating with the study. Also, the trial run of the online questionnaire was utilized to capture feedback from actual principals to ensure the questions aligned with the research purpose and were meaningful questions for this study. Validity is the degree to which an instrument measures what it intends to measure (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). Having valid measurements provided transparency with researcher subjectivity.

A triangulation analysis of the online questionnaire, semi-structured recorded interviews, and field notes was conducted to confirm the findings. Also, I utilized multiple data sources such as the field interviews, TEA enrollment data, and OCR school data throughout the data collection process to confirm the findings. Triangulation can lead to credibility by using different sources of data, methods or investigations (Erlandson et al., 1993). Data analysis itself followed a qualitative interpretive approach. Interview notes were periodically repeated back to participants to check for accuracy in reporting. Taken together, the recorded semi-structured and unstructured questions and responses became multi-vocal interpretations of the same phenomenon and was an important source for discovering meaning behind the actions and behaviors of the participants. In a phenomenological study, the researcher usually approach participants

with the aim of finding out more about a human experience through detailed descriptions (Creswell, 2009).

Reliability

To ensure credibility and trustworthiness, peer debriefing and member checking were utilized. Peer debriefing helps to build credibility by consulting with a peer whom has a general understanding of the work done in this study (Erlandson et al., 1993). Also, I had several principals who did not participate in the study to complete the online questionnaire protocol and provided feedback to ensure reliability with the questionnaire. Furthermore, member checking was used during the recorded interviews to ensure accuracy. Member checking during the interview allowed me to verify interpretations as I collected the data (Erlandson et al.). Finally, member checking conducted in the follow-up after the interview with participant one provided the opportunity for me to correct the errors and omissions (Erlandson et al.).

Researcher Perspective

Furthermore, my familiarity with PBIS and experience of over 24 years as a practitioner in the field of education perhaps showed my professional perspective and influence. As an African American, my social experience also informed my perspective and influence. Therefore, I disclosed my practitioner background information in the recruitment phase of the process to establish a rapport with the principals. I am very passionate about all students having access to a high quality and challenging learning environment where teachers and administrators are fully committed to student success. I selected this topic, first and foremost, because I firmly believe that every educator

should be committed to promoting positive student behavioral interactions to promote student success. Second, the current trajectory of school discipline and the disproportionality that exist among African-American and Hispanic students is deeply troublesome. Because of the long-term negative impact, constructive reform and intervention is critical.

Beginning with my philosophy of education, I believe one of the most important functions of government is educating the students in society and preparing them to live productive lives. Acknowledging that it is important for students to learn the essential knowledge and skills necessary to be productive citizens, I also believe that the pursuit must go beyond the status quo and promote self-actualization. Educators should take reasonable steps to ensure that programs are designed to provide maximum knowledge and positive learning experiences for all students. In the public school setting, we often look to educators to provide training and support with a variety of interventions for students; therefore, educating the whole child is key to achieving the goal of all students reaching their full potential.

Moreover, it is paramount to consider personal characteristics, experiences, and events in an individual's life that may affect learning. Perception is in the eye of the beholder. Consequently, it is also important to build a positive relationship to meet the individual needs of students. Recognizing the need to have principles and standards to govern student behavior will promote more effective strategies for working with all learners. Principles such as compassion, integrity, patience, positive attitude, resourcefulness, and self-discipline can go a long way in teaching students the universal

practices that would lead to acceptable behaviors in society. Connecting universal principles to student behavior provide an opportunity for educational leaders to work in more preventive roles with campus staff and students. I am totally committed to promoting the teaching of social and emotional learning skills students need to function and manage the daily activities of life.

Being a former employee in several Texas school districts also showed my perspective and influence. Over the last eight years, I developed programs and coordinated district-wide implementation of a PBIS framework in a Texas school district. Remarkably, I experienced the unique opportunity to present trainings related to this topic with national leaders in the field, Dr. Russell Skiba and Dr. Randy Sprick. Also, I have presented hundreds of hours of professional development and trainings including presenting at National conferences such as the National Association of School Psychologists and Safe and Civil Schools to help achieve the goal of providing students with a quality education. Likewise, I had the esteem honor of presenting at a Congressional Briefing on School Discipline in Washington, D.C. in 2013. Having familiarity with Texas high schools in several districts and presenting numerous presentations throughout the state and nationally led to some pre-existing relationships between several participants and me. Establishing trust and ensuring a safe environment for participants was a key priority.

Education is a lifelong journey; therefore, this phenomenological qualitative research study was a rewarding experience that could yield promising results. I chose to be an educator because I believe in students and I enjoy working to get others to believe

in students. While being committed to the goal of improving the educational outcomes of students from vulnerable populations, there are still too many African-American students following into the discipline trap and getting locked out of opportunities to achieve a quality education. With the national phenomenon of disproportionality of African-American students in school discipline crisis, I wondered why some schools are successful with decreasing disproportionality in school discipline with African-American students? Desiring the answer to this question is what led me to pursue this research study.

Recognizing the limitations of current research and my potential influence on the topic, it was of critical importance as a practitioner conducting the research for this study to put in safeguards to prevent too much involvement from my perspective or bias that may surface (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Establishing trust was crucial with this phenomenological study. I highlighted experience as a practitioner and remained consciously aware of my background related to this topic to counteract researcher bias. Also, techniques such as the interpretive approach provided a foundation for making sense of the school leaders' experiences and applying meaning to establish best practices. It was my desire that an effective PBIS-CRIL framework model for reducing disproportionality of African-American students in school discipline would derive from this study.

Summary

This phenomenological qualitative research study highlighted the perspectives of principals in relation to the disproportionality of African-American students with OSS

and expulsions. According to Lunenburg & Irby (2008), the purpose of qualitative research is to gather a detailed understanding of the participants and their perspectives. Purposive sampling was utilized to identify the schools meeting the criteria for this study. Carefully, identifying the campuses and ensuring that the campuses met all of the requirements promoted validity and confirmed the findings. Detailed portrayals of the school leaders' experience and perceptions were highlighted in this study. The qualitative research process included gathering upclose information by talking directly to school leaders in the natural setting (Creswell, 2007). Furthermore, collecting and analyzing the data with all the necessary safeguards increased the reliability of the findings and recommendations.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter begins with an overview of the purpose of this phenomenological qualitative research study and a review of the methodology followed by a discussion of the findings. Recognizing that systemic disparities exist in school discipline across racial lines, the need to align discipline practices with PBIS and CRIL is paramount. African-American students are disproportionately impacted by OSS and expulsions (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). The disparate impact of OSS and expulsions on African-American students constitute the need for research-proven strategies for implementing PBIS with CRIL to reduce the punitive consequences. I conducted a phenomenological qualitative research study to explicate the meaning and essence of the school leaders' perceptions of the disproportionality in school discipline with African-American students phenomenon. The experiences of the different school leaders are analyzed and compared to get the basic underlying structure of the 40-year phenomenon (Merriam, 2009). A variety of methods are used to describe the meanings of the central themes and sub-categories theme that emerged the school leaders' lived experiences.

Review of Purpose and Methods

The purpose of the study was threefold. First, I determined the extent of PBIS implementation in schools with low rates of OSS or expulsions of African-American students. Second, I explored school leaders' perceptions on the effective implementation of PBIS and CRIL in 5A and 6A Texas high schools with low OSS and expulsions rates among African-American students. Finally, I explored the school leaders' perceptions of

OSS and expulsions of African-American students in relation to PBIS. While the criteria for the high schools included low rates of OSS and expulsions, the majority of the high schools in this study had zero rate for expulsions. Therefore, the discussion in this chapter consist mainly on the OSS. Large Texas high schools implementing PBIS with a 16% to 33% African-American student enrollment with low rates of OSS and expulsions of African-American students were targeted to participate. According to Welch & Payne (2010), schools with a larger percentage of African-American students are more likely to use punitive disciplinary consequences. I delimited this study to African-American students because of the persistent problem and lack of proven resources to change the disproportionality. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the list of high schools started with 88 schools and 54 met the criteria for this study. Ten principals participated with the online questionnaire and seven school leaders participated with the recorded semi-structure interviews.

The following four research questions were utilized to guide this study:

Research Questions

1. To what extent is PBIS implemented in schools with low suspension rates of OSS or expulsions of African-American students?

2. What are the school leaders' perceptions on effective implementation of PBIS?

3. How do the school leaders' perceive OSS and expulsions of African-American students in relation to PBIS?

4. To what extent is CRIL included the implementation of PBIS?

This phenomenological qualitative research study was conducted to exam the school leaders' perceptions of effective implementation of PBIS with CRIL in reducing OSS and expulsions of African-American students in five large Texas high schools. Pre-existing data from the OCR school data and TEA enrollment data were disaggregated. Fifty-four Texas 5A and 6A high schools were targeted to complete an anonymous online questionnaire. Data collection also included semi-structured recorded interviews of the school leaders at targeted high schools. Ten principals completed the online questionnaire. The results indicted that two high schools were implementing PBIS and CRIL at a high level of implementation, two schools were at the medium level and more than half scored low level of implementation.

Five of the ten principals from the online questionnaire, an associate principal, and assistant principal completed the semi-structured recorded interviews. The interviews were recorded on audio devices and transcribed verbatim after each session. Verbatim transcriptions of the recorded interviews provides the best database for analysis (Merriam, 2009). Utilizing the recorded interviews ensured that the participants' responses were preserved for analysis (Merriam). Likewise, field notes were taken during the interviews for memory checking and capturing important researcher notes.

Finally, the transcriptions were unitized and significant statements were captured on the notecards. The notecard number, participant number, and page number were listed at the top of the card for cross-analyses and to ensure accurate interpretation. The three documents coincided making fact checking easier and ensuring accuracy with data analysis. The data were reviewed multiple times to cluster similar data and identify

recurring topics. Additional analyses were conducted for determining themes based on the participants responses. The semi-structured recorded interviews were a major source of the qualitative data needed for understanding this phenomenological study (Merriam, 2009).

Demographics of the Participants

In Table 6, pseudonyms were utilized to discuss participants and their respective campuses. The participants for the online questionnaire were a diverse group of the principals; however the majority of the school leaders for the recorded interviews were African-Americans males. The participants' experience as a principal ranged between 2 and 20 years with a similar pathway to becoming a campus principal. Selective sampling was based on the OCR school discipline data and the TEA student enrollment data for large Texas high school with a 16%--33% African-American student enrollment. The 5A and 6A high schools meeting the requirements were targeted to recruit the principals for this study. Specifically, campuses with low OSS or expulsions of African-American students according to the 2011-12 OCR school data were targeted to complete the online questionnaire and semi-structured recorded interviews. Field notes were taken during the interviews in conjunction with the recorded interviews. The principals' recorded responses were transcribed and significant statements to the interview protocol questions were written on the notecards. Pseudonyms were utilized for the participants and the campuses.

Table 6.

Semi-Structured Interview Participants Information

Alias	Gender	Race	PBIS Training Years	PBIS Score	Administration Years	Campus
Participant One	M	W	0	8	18	Franklin
Participant Two	M	B	0	52	2	Braxton
Participant Three	M	B	2	40	20	Lucky
Participant Four	F	W	9	80	9	Sunny
Participant Five	M	B	3	88	15	Victory
Participant Six	M	B	N/A	N/A	N/A	Victory
Participant Seven	M	B	N/A	N/A	N/A	Victory

Research Sites

Franklin (5A). Franklin High School was the first location site for this study. Franklin opened in 2001. As reported by OCR 2011-12 school data, the student enrollment was approximately 1932 students and the demographic make-up of the student population was 18.7% African American, 0.5% American Indian, 5.2% Asian, 28.2% Hispanic, 1.4% Two or More Races, and 46% White. Twenty-six percent of the students qualified for free or reduced lunch compared to the district 47.2% (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Franklin had a mobility rate of 11.4% compared to the district 16.1 % (TEA, 2011). The campus accountability rating for 2010-11 was

Academically Acceptable and the 2012-13 rating was Met Standard (TEA, 2011; TEA, 2013). Franklin scored 8% on the online questionnaire, which is low level PBIS and CRIL implementation.

Braxton (5A turned 6A). Braxton High School was the second location site for this study. Braxton opened in 2010. As reported by OCR 2011-12 school data, the student enrollment was approximately 1323 students and the demographic make-up of the student population was 23.4% African American, 0.1% American Indian, 8.9% Asian, 23.9% Hispanic, 0.1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 0.8% Two or More Races, and 42.7% White (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Twenty-three percent of the students qualified for free or reduced lunch compared to the district 47.2% (U.S. Department of Education). Braxton had a mobility rate of 12.1% compared to the district 16.1 % (TEA, 2011). The campus accountability rating for 2010-11 was Academically Acceptable and the 2012-13 rating was Met Standard with Distinction Designations in Reading/ELA (TEA, 2011; TEA, 2013). Braxton scored 52% on the online questionnaire, which is low level PBIS and CRIL implementation.

Lucky (5A). Lucky High School was the third location site for this study. Lucky opened in 1949. As reported by OCR 2011-12 school data, the student enrollment was approximately 1949 students and the demographic make-up of the student population was 25.8% African American, 0.2% American Indian, 5.1% Asian, 47.2% Hispanic, 0.8% Two or More Races, and 20.9% White (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Over forty-nine percent of the students qualified for free or reduced lunch compared to the district 47.2% (U.S. Department of Education). Lucky had a mobility rate of 18.6%

compared to the district 16.1 % (TEA, 2011). The campus accountability rating for 2010-11 was Academically Acceptable and the 2012-13 rating was Met Standard with Distinction Designations in Reading/ELA and Math (TEA, 2011; TEA, 2013). Lucky scored 40% on the online questionnaire, which is low level PBIS and CRIL implementation.

Sunny (6A). Sunny High School was the fourth location site for this study. Sunny opened in 2008. As reported by OCR 2011-12 school data, the student enrollment was approximately 3386 students and the demographic make-up of the student population was 21% African American, 0.5% American Indian, 6.2% Asian, 54.3% Hispanic, 0.1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 2.2% Two or More Races, and 15.6% White (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Over sixty percent of the students qualified for free or reduced lunch compared to the district 48.3% (U.S. Department of Education) . Sunny had a mobility rate of 14.6% compared to the district 13 % (TEA, 2011). The campus accountability rating for 2010-11 was Academically Acceptable and the 2012-13 rating was Met Standard (TEA, 2011; TEA, 2013). Sunny scored 80% on the online questionnaire, which is medium level PBIS and CRIL implementation.

Victory (6A). Victory High School was the fifth location site for this study. Victory opened in 1962; however, a new campus was built and the campus reopened in 1999. As reported by OCR 2011-12 school data, the student enrollment was approximately 4609 students and the demographic make-up of the student population was 26.4% African American, 0.4% American Indian, 1.1% Asian, 65.6% Hispanic, 0.1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 1.6% Two or More Races, and 4.7% White

(U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Sixty-seven percent of the students qualified for free or reduced lunch compared to the district 78.8% (U.S. Department of Education) . Victory had a mobility rate of 14% compared to the district 13.6% (TEA, 2011). The campus accountability rating for 2010-11 was Recognized and the 2012-13 rating was Met Standard (TEA, 2011; TEA, 2013). Victory scored 88% on the online questionnaire, which is high level PBIS and CRIL implementation.

Results of Research Questions

In this section, I present the results of the analysis used to answer the research questions. Several themes emerged from the participants' responses to the interview questions. One hundred and ninety-one note cards containing the card number, participant number, and the corresponding transcript page number were sorted and organized into ten categories: (a) Training and Implementation; (b) Hiring Practices and Leadership; (c) Relationships; (d) Learning and Academics; (e) Data; (f) Discipline; (g) Background and Experience; (h) Culture; (i) Parent Involvement and Community; and (j) Miscellaneous. Also, theme eight, Culture, had three sub-category themes to emerge: (a) Respect and Diversity; (b) Climate and Environment; and (c) Race. The ten themes and three sub-category themes are discussed in conjunction with the four research questions. Some themes overlapped between categories and sub-categories.

Research Question 1--To what extent is PBIS implemented in schools with low rates of OSS or expulsions of African American students?

In analyzing the answers to this question, training and implementation was the first theme to emerge.

Training and implementation. Nearly all of the participants stated that the majority of their staff was implementing PBIS. Four of the five principals' responses ranged between 70-90% of teachers implementing PBIS. The other principal rated his teachers at 55% implementation. Ironically, Franklin High School principal rated his teachers the highest between 80-90% on effective implementation on PBIS; however, the campus received the lowest implementation score on the online questionnaire, 8%.

Another interesting finding, Victory High School principal rated his teachers at 55%; however, their campus received the highest implementation score on the online questionnaire at 88%. Acknowledging that interpretations can be faulty (Strake, 2010), triangulation of the OCR 2011-12 school data, online questionnaires, semi-structured recorded interviews, and field notes were critical for cross-analysis of the participants' responses. Approximately 22% of the school leaders' responses were sorted in the training and implementation section. The majority of the school leaders expressed that getting staff buy-in was crucial and that it was very difficult to get everybody on board. Information related to effective implementation by teachers included reflections such as more training, revisiting expectations, consistency, and student incentives. For example, Participant Two stated, "taking the time and just having this conversation with someone helps me to think about circling back to do some training."

The results from the analysis and triangulation of the online questionnaires, semi-structured recorded interviews, and field notes indicated that all five schools had some level of PBIS implementation. Three of the five schools are listed as low level implementation of PBIS, one medium level and one high level as evidenced by the

findings from online questionnaire and school leaders' responses to the interview questions. Several of the school leaders stated that their campuses were not true PBIS campuses; nonetheless, were implementing selected components. I found that statement to be particularly interesting during the triangulation of the data sources process. Hence, Franklin high school principal indicated that their campus had zero trainings years of PBIS, no PBIS campus team, and zero years of CRIL training. The OCR 2011-12 school discipline data (U.S. Department of Education, 2014) showed that Franklin high school had the largest disportionality rate of OSS out of the five high schools. Although the principal's perception was that 80-90% of his teachers were effective implementing PBIS.

The school leader's perception here could be a reason why critics of PBIS believe that it is ineffective or does not work. The school leader could be functioning under the notion that students and staff at his school already know the behavioral requirements and that there is no need to focus resources on PBIS staff training or a PBIS campus team. The various programs that the high schools utilized for PBIS made it difficult to compare the schools' PBIS implementation. Although the high schools differ from each other, there are some common contextual variables that should be considered when implementing PBIS in any high school (Flannery, Fennning, Kato, & McIntosh, 2013). While the majority of the principals stated that staff buy-in, training, consistency, and student incentives were crucial components for PBIS, only two of the five schools discussed actual implementation plans that included training the staff, student incentives and school-wide PBIS. Assuming that the staff and student body are fully aware of the

expectations for the school can be a common misconception that contribute to the gaps in PBIS implementation on high school campuses. The principals must be proactive and intentional in their approach towards PBIS (Richards et al., 2014; Sprick, 2009).

The two campuses with the highest questionnaire rating had the common language component that was taught to teachers and students, provided PBIS training, and had students incentives built into the framework. School-wide PBIS included overt teaching of expectations, monitoring the behavioral expectations, and providing feedback (Sprick, 2009). The process should be the same for staff and students. Utilizing the teach, monitor, and feedback strategies in PBIS provides an ongoing improvement process for schools (Sprick, 2009). For example, one school leader indicated that their campus utilizes the CHAMPS framework. Their CHAMPS focus was on proactive behavior and de-escalation, which required some work to get teachers onboard.

There were many similarities among the school leaders' responses regarding staff buy-in, follow-up training, and teachers implementing PBIS; however, the program or framework components that the five high schools utilized for PBIS were different. In Table 7, the program or framework components of PBIS implementation identified by the high school leaders during the interview are highlighted with a description or comment about the program. The school leaders' passion and high degree of commitment were reflective in many of the statements.

Table 7.

PBIS frameworks from the five high schools

High School	**PBIS**	**Principals' Responses**
Franklin HS (5A) Participant One	Capturing Kids Hearts & Social Contracts	"Having real conservations, having the teachers build social contracts with kids. I think it is important to have role models that look like the students so the students can relate."
Braxton HS (6A) Participant Two	Restorative Practices & Customer Service	"The two main pillars. At the end of the day if a kid makes a mistake our goal is that they learn from their mistake and they don't make the same mistake again. It is proven that discipline consequences doesn't work, punishment doesn't work. We don't have ISS. It's all about maximizing the instructional seat time."
Lucky HS (5A) Participant Three	Restorative Practices, Capturing Kids Hearts, Professional Learning Communities	"We try to correct the off-task behavior to the point that it is totally eliminated. We bring in the student and counsel with the student with an assistant principal or with a team to get an understanding of why the student engaged in the off-task behavior."
Sunny HS (6A) Participant Four	PBIS for 9 years with the same administrative staff for 9 years	"Our PBIS is built on the acronym VALOR—Value, Aspire, Lead, Own, and Respond. Valor is an important concept in our history. They talk it, we use the language, there are posters around rooms, the teacher teach with VALOR in mine."
Victory HS (6A) Participant Five	Safe and Civil Schools CHAMPS and FOUNDATION Fundamental Five	"Proactive behavior is important for all of our teachers as well as administrators to use. The structure framework of the district is CHAMPS. Our teachers are trained in the school-wide use of CHAMPS and FOUNDATIONS.
Victory HS (6A) Participant Six Associate	Safe and Civil Schools CHAMPS and FOUNDATION	"Our goal is to give put-ups not put-downs. Rewarding kids for doing the right thing. Deescalate the situations by having conversations that are proactive."
Victory HS (6A) Participant Seven Assistant	Safe and Civil Schools CHAMPS and FOUNDATION	"We were met with opposition from some of our teachers thanks to the principal and participant six; we were able to deal with it."

Research Question 2-- What are the school leaders' perceptions on effective implementation of PBIS?

In answering this question, three recurring themes surfaced: (a) hiring practices and leadership; (b) relationships and (c) learning and academics.

Hiring practices and leadership. For this research question, three of the ten themes accounted for approximately 32% of the school leaders' responses. Theme number two, Hiring Practices and Leadership, had 25 school leaders' responses in which four of five principals shared a similar belief that effective implementation of PBIS starts with hiring the right person for the school. Several school leaders expressed strong convictions about hiring the right staff for the job. Hiring practices were the single most shared perspectives of the ten themes to emerge from the data. Having staff with the same mindset, staff that reflect the student body, staff that treat everyone with respect, staff with diverse backgrounds, and staff that can work effectively with all students were the top overarching responses from the school leaders. Participant One stated,

> When I hire people and talk about our mission and vision at Franklin; it revolves around having people with the same mindset as you. I like to tell a story or use a scenario to get their reaction. Our Superintendent makes it known his cultural beliefs are about how we treat kids. He has hired every building principal over the 19 years in the district so he hires people with the same beliefs that we treat everyone respectful regardless of where you come from. That in turns trickle down to the principals. If I could start over, I would hire every single teacher in this building.

Participant Two stated,

> Look for people with the right spirit, demeanor. I look for how I think they will interact with our kids. It's not all about the content and instructional practices; we can teach you that but you have to have the right spirit, heart and motivation to be in this profession".

Likewise, Participant Four stated,

> Hiring a wide variety of staff and having a very diverse staff. We make an effort to hire people from various background and it becomes a good sharing effort when talking about students' behavior. I hire people I want to stay in this building. These kids are transient: they have trust issues. People are in and out of their lives.

Participant Five stated, "I hire administrators who reflect the student body. I went out of my way to hire two Hispanic administrators: I do the same with the teachers."

Because hiring practices were not included with neither the online questionnaire nor the semi-structured interviews an additional cross-analysis of the notecards, transcriptions, and unitized list was conducted to determine the interview protocol questions that generated the hiring practices responses. The following four interview protocol questions generated the hiring practices responses:

1. How is CRIL included in your campus PBIS framework?
   Participants One, Four, and Five responses came from this question.
2. How do administrators provide support for PBIS and CRIL?
   Participant Four responses came from this question.
3. What role did PBIS and CRIL play in reducing the rates of OSS and expulsions with African American Students?
   Participant One responses came from this question.

4. What percentage of teachers in your building are effectively implementing cultural responsive practices?
   Participant Two responses came from this question.

Three of the seven participants frequently referenced district-level expectations for how the campuses work with students. The school leaders also emphasized like-minded people and diversity within the staff. The school leaders' perceptions presented compelling evidence to support that the principals had a meaningful role in the implementation of PBIS. Whenever possible, that principal role started with hiring the right staff. In looking at the questions that generated the participants' responses, the findings from the data suggested that some level of CRIL may exist within the PBIS framework or maybe as a stand-alone component. The school leaders' perceptions of hiring a diverse staff, the right fit, and a cultural match are practices that support the research on CRIL. Cultural mismatch has been found to be a contributing factor to the disproportionality of school discipline with African American (Skiba et al., 2011). Therefore, the school leaders' perceptions on hiring supports CRIL.

The triangulation of the three data sources were paramount to being transparent with analyzing and presenting the findings for this research question. For instance, all of the participants talked about the importance of building relationships with students, and shared amazing stories, as examples of how those relationships should look. One principal talked about his first experience working with children from poverty and the impact it had on him as a leader. He shared his perspective of how there was a preference among educators to choose schools that were less needy. In analyzing the various responses he shared in reference to poverty, the findings suggest that the

principal's perception is that poverty maybe a factor contributing to OSS and expulsions of African-American students. Typology could play a role in the disproportionality in school discipline. The findings from the research on poverty have consistently indicated that even when controlling for poverty the disproportionality still remained (Noltemeyer & McLoughlin, 2010; Skiba et al., 2014). The data from the multiple sources did not revealed any findings of the principal's experience with poverty evolving into the PBIS implementation to address economic factors.

Likewise, another principal talked about the importance of hiring a Hispanic assistant principal. Throughout the seven participants' responses the findings did not indicate any information regarding an implementation plan for culturally relevant staff training specific to Hispanic students. Based on the findings it appeared that the school leaders in this study relied heavily on the hiring the right fit. The findings did not indicate any CRIL specific staff trainings or PBIS implementation plan approach for including cultural responsiveness. Therefore, more research is needed in the context of schools implementing PBIS with CRIL.

Unlike the other four principals, Participant Three responses in this category centered on leadership. Participant Three stated, "As the administrator of that campus it is your duty, if you are going to implement the programs then you monitor to make sure that it's being done. Ensure that it's not only implemented with fidelity but also for equity purposes." Participant Three response was generated from interview protocol question number nine, What advice would you provide to other high schools implementing PBIS with CRIL?

Relationships. The second largest group of responses related to research question two was relationships. Twenty-two participant responses captured the school leaders' perceptions about relationships. Twenty of the responses were about building relationships with students and the other two were about building relationship with staff and parents. The school leaders' responses were generated from 11 of the 17 interview protocol questions. Interview protocol questions three and nine were the most indicative to answering research questions two. In Table 8 and Table 9, the school leaders' perceptions are presented verbatim.

Table 8.

Representative Statements for Effective Implementation of PBIS

What is your role or responsibilities for effective implementing PBIS at your school?
1. Lead by example, bring it back to forefront, look at your data, report back and let others know how we are doing.
2. My role is to communicate the vision of how we interact with kids and people with education and the community as a whole. We are big on customer service and that we are going to always reach out to parents and include them as part of our partnership. Communicate that vision and ensure that anyone who interacts with kids—administrators, counselors, teachers, and para-professionals communicate the expectations of how we interact and how we deal with kids on this campus. Those are the main two and then I have to be the model. I have to be the model of what the expectation is.
3. My role is to monitor and make sure that PBIS is being implementing with fidelity. I try to leave my AP to use the program as they see fit to implement and I try to monitor and make sure it's being done equitably.
4. My role is keeping it in forefront, I have an AP that bought into it and a College and Career teacher that lead and organize it. It's teacher led. You must have the teacher buy-in. I talk about it, model it, I encourage it and talk about ways we can used it. I try to put people in the right place.
5. As campus administrators we plan trainings, and try to provide real-life scenarios of what they will see in the classroom.
6. We have the CHAMPS training where we go over the theoretical framework. It's staff development, classroom walk-throughs, checking to making sure teachers are on duty and greeting students. We check failure rates for teachers and attendance rate for both teachers and students.
7. We check phone call logs homes to see if teachers are making calls home and building the connection with the parents.

Table 9.

Representative Statements for Implementation of PBIS with CRIL

What advice would you provide to other high schools implementing PBIS with CRIL?
1. You must spend the upfront time hiring the people. If it they are not a good fit don't hire them for the job.
2. Abolish ISS. Get rid of it. It's a very cold environment. The energy that you spend trying to run it like a prison; It just doesn't work. Having to track down teachers to get work, trying to make sure the kids are not falling a sleep. Most of the time it's not a certified position and they have trouble assisting the kids and end up getting frustrated with the kids. You put them in there because they are having problems and place them in non-engaging environment.
3. As the administrator of that campus it is your duty, if you are going to implement the programs then you monitor and to make sure that it's being done. Ensure that it's not only implemented with fidelity but also for equity purposes. Start off with a core group of teachers and administrators and making sure they are on board and having their behavior and actions spread out to others in the schools.
4. Be prepared to spend lots of time, patience, and be opened to a variety of people's views, decide what your non negotiables, having clear goals and non-complicated goals because that's where you can use it and talk about it. (Ex. Valour) It's a daily process when you are training teachers, training students and also training each other as far as administrators. Staying focus on the bigger picture which is engaging our learners to be successful. Giving them a sense of pride so they can have a high self-esteem in caring them through the day-to-day challenges
5. I think I would encourage other schools to definitely provide cultural relevant training to their staff members and know that it's very important and that students do look at that as being important. Literature and stuff that they read and things that reflect kids do those types of things. Hire quality staff that reflect the ethnic background of the students

Learning and academics. The third group of responses related to research question two was Learning and Academics. Fourteen responses were related to the school leaders' perceptions about expectations for student learning and the campus instructional environment. Five of the fourteen were from Participant Three and Six. Participant Three expressed that there is power in getting a quality education and he discussed how it can change an economic situation for students. Participant Three stated,

> As a Title I school, our focus is to address the needs of our diverse students. Being a Black man I can share my story of how I overcame certain things. We are in the hallways and letting students know that we are here. I am always in the classrooms and letting the students know that we are here to help them.

Building trusting and supportive relationships between students and educators are wonderful attributes; however, to be an effective practice for PBIS with CRIL it should be applied school-wide. A cross-analysis of the school leaders' responses to online questionnaire and the responses to interview protocol were crucial to getting an accurate interpretation. Furthermore, Participant Five discussed the importance of leading by example and demonstrating to students how to engage with each other in a professional way. He referred to the Fundamental 5 several times. In a response to a follow up question about the description of the Fundamental 5, Participant Five emphasized that it was a district-wide initiative for quality instruction based on the Fundamental 5 book by Sean Cain and Mike Laird be implemented district-wide. The participant stated,

> Fundamental Five is an improvement model which include the following five components: (1) Framing the Lesson—I do, we will do, and you will do, (2)

Being in Power Zone—Students learn better when the teacher is in close proximity of the students, (3) Small group purposeful talks when you are listening for the critical thinking with the students, (4) Recognition—Student incentives and rewards for doing well, and (5) Critical writing—Pieces of critical writing everyday.

Participant Five also shared a story about the district's annual ritual of rewarding students who maintained 3.65 GPA with a big celebration and school letterman jacket for academics in the presence of parents, educators, and community leaders. Participant One and Two also shared similar comments about learning such as a "community of learning" and students being actively engaged.

Research Question 3—How do the school leaders perceive OSS and expulsions of African-American students in relation to PBIS?

The analysis of the school leaders' responses for this question resulted in two themes: data and discipline.

Data. Research question three was designed to determine the relation of OSS and expulsions of African-American students to PBIS.. A total of 35 responses were analyzed accounting for approximately 18% of the school leaders' responses. The Data theme had nine notecards from two school leaders' perceptions. Participant One had six responses regarding data and how having weekly meeting with his administrators to discuss attendance, academic, and discipline data drives his role as a principal. Participant One shared a story about how reviewing discipline data helped resolve a big discipline problem at his campus. The principal stated,

> We noticed that we had a pattern of fights taking place that started in the field house but trickled over to the school. It started with kids horse playing that escalated into fists being thrown. The easy answer would have been to suspend the kids but that does not change behavior or the problem; it just remove the problem for a little time. We found out that it was the football players who were messing around during off-season. They had some down time and they filled that downtime with foolishness. I went out to the field house with the security guard, and the police to have real a conversation about the expectations that I had for behavior on campus. The leaders in the group needed to take care of the foolishness in the group. We were going exterminate the problem or it would result in bigger punishment for the kids that did fight.

Furthermore, Participant Four emphasized the importance of continuing conversations. She stated,

> In looking at the data, we noticed African American boys were not taking AP classes. Keeping in mine the economic factor and incorporating ways for students to participate and access these opportunities. We taught the kids how to write grants and how to utilize the resources. The more I work with culturally responsive leadership it's an economic cultural thing that drives most things as opposed to race.

The findings demonstrate that school leaders' perceptions on data is consistent with the research. Data entry and an analysis plan is one of the critical elements of the Benchmarks of Quality assessment rating for PBIS and FOUNDATIONS (OSEP

Technical Assistance Center, 2015; Sprick, 2009). Because the school leaders in this study indicted no information on actual discipline data collected and monitored over a stated time period impacting African-American students, the findings cannot be confirmed for this theme.

Discipline. Discipline was the second theme that emerged from the cross-analysis of research question three and the school leaders' perceptions. The findings presented in this section are discussed based on the interview protocol question regarding the campus low rates of OSS or expulsions. Being able to present compelling evidence of valid and relevant information is a personal matter as well as an research-based matter (Stake, 2010). This research questions was the key focus guiding the study. Therefore, I conducted a triangulation using multiple data sources to organize the school leaders' responses around the interview protocol questions to cross-analyze their responses with the OCR school discipline data. There were a total of 23 responses with the discipline theme plus two responses that overlapped from the hiring and culture themes. The majority of the school leaders had very detailed responses regarding the campuses low OSS or expulsions with African-American students. In Table 10, the school leaders' responses to the question, "How did your campus achieve low rates of OSS and expulsions with African-American students? are reported.

Table 10.

Statements for campus low rates of OSS and expulsions

How did your campus achieve low rates of OSS and/or expulsions with African American students?	
High School	**Principals' Responses**
Franklin HS (5A) Participant One	OSS and Expulsions is a last result unless it's a mandatory offense. It is the way we do business here. It's the respect factor and kids have pride in their school. We avoid discrepancies placement unless it's a district mandatory placement. If a student does something like blatantly cuss out a teacher, than they probably will get that placement.
Braxton HS (6A) Participant Two	It's about customer service, seeing the kids as individual. Taking the time to look at the kid, looking at the grades, attendance, the whole child, where they are coming from as whole. We don't have ISS. We have CFS-Center For Success. It's a one-stop shop for our students. Our kids know to come there or if a kid gets removed from class, the security officer picks the kid up from class and take him to CFS. We have an administrator assigned there; one-day week and they deal with discipline and any type of issue that come into that office they deal with it. Maximizing the seat time help these kids perform academically.
Lucky HS (5A) Participant Three	Because we develop relationship with our kids, we talk to our kids. A non-negotiable for students is "I don't why I did it." We tell students that there is always a reason for the behavior. We try to have the student engage in dialogue to learn what was behind the behavior. A second non-negotiable is a teacher belittle or condemning a student or trying to enact a punitive type consequence for a student's off-task behavior. Is it a teacher condemning a student? A third non-negotiable is letting an off-task behavior go and not addressing the behavior.
Sunny HS (6A) Participant Four	We look at our data. Do we have a rise in African American or Hispanic or any kids in discipline placements? We talk about why it's happening and what we can do to prevent it. And that does come back to the CRIL issues. We had to talk about what are our expectations? What does hallway behavior look like? Let's own your actions and responding correctly. How to respond is an issue so we look at how to respond? Acronyms still holds timely after is 9 years. Monthly PBIS meeting that are teacher run.
Victory HS (6A) Participant Five	Our district expects us to use a variety of strategies to help our kids be successful. We are having conversations at my district PLC meetings about student suspensions and alternative placements. We try to preplan the strategies that we are going to use when there are behavior problems. It could be that we send the kid to the counselor. We may do PE or lunch detention as opposed to in-school suspension or out of school suspension.
Victory HS (6A) Participant Six	We do the attendance contracts for students who have attendance issues. We are meeting with them individually and discussing where they are and where they need to be to rebound. Also, we have a skipping form and the students are required to get signatures from their teachers to help keep them on track. We assign mentors for students returning from the DAEP to help keep them on track. Also, we have some of our students involved with Team court through a partnership.
Victory HS (6A) Participant Seven	Also, for behaviors we have students go through the RTI process. We put interventions in place and monitor those interventions. We remind the students of interventions and walk them through it. When they see we have an eye on them the chances are that they are going to reduce the behaviors so they can get the rewards at the end of the day.

Although there were PBIS framework components at all five schools, there were still gaps pertaining to implementation of PBIS as determined by the online questionnaire rating and the actual school leaders' perceptions. For example, one school leader stated, "We don't really have a PBIS model but, we do take parts of PBIS that we utilized in the school." Another example is of missing components of the PBIS framework are the principals' response "No to having a PBIS Team" on the online questionnaire. Three of the five campuses in this study did not have a PBIS Team. Furthermore, the two campuses that replied "Yes" to having a campus PBIS Team scored a higher rating on the online questionnaire and had lower OSS rates among the African-American students. The triangulation of the online questionnaire rating, semi-structured recorded interviews, field notes, the OCR school data, and the TEA enrollment and PEIMS data provided multiple data sources for interpretation and sensemaking of the school leaders' perceptions.

In Table 11, the 2011-12 OCR school discipline data is listed for each school in this study (U. Department of Education, 2014). The CRDC survey is collected every two years to measure student discipline and other educational areas that impact education equity and opportunity (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). According the CRDC 2016 report, African-American students are 3.8 times as likely to receive one or more OSS and 1.9 times as likely to be expelled from school without educational services as White students (U.S. Department of Education). In this section, findings for the five high are presented. Also, the CRDC 2013-14 school discipline data in Table 12 is also analyzed to answer research question three.

Table 11.

Texas High Schools OCR Discipline Data 2011-12

School	2011-12 Total Students	2011-12 AA Enrollment	2011-12 OSS AA Rate	2011-12 Expulsions AA Rate
Franklin HS	1934	18.70%	41.90%	0
Braxton HS	1324	23.40%	39.10%	0
Lucky HS	1680	25.80%	41.20%	0
Sunny HS	3369	21%	28.20%	0
Victory HS	4607	26.40%	31.60%	66.70%

U.S. Department of Education, OCR 2016

Note: African American(AA)

Table 12.

Texas High Schools OCR Discipline Data 2013-14

School	2013-14 Total Students	2013-14 AA Enrollment	2013-14 OSS AA Rate	2013-14 Expulsions AA Rate
Franklin HS	1954	20.3%	51.3%	0
Braxton HS	2063	22.9%	36.4%	0
Lucky HS	1523	26.9%	39%	0
Sunny HS	3529	21.6%	29.7%	0
Victory HS	4724	25.9%	39.9%	36.4%

U.S. Department of Education, OCR 2016

Note: African American(AA)

Based on the data in Table 11, Franklin High School had the highest rate of disproportionality of African-American students with OSS of the five campuses. African-American students comprised 18.7% of the student population and accounted for 41.90% of the OSS compared to Hispanics at 28.2% and accounted for 31.1%; Whites at 46.0% and accounted for 21.16%; Asians at 5,2% and accounted for 2.7%; American Indian-Alaska Native at 0.5% and accounted for 0%; and Two or More Races at 1.4% and accounted for 2.7% (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). The campus had a 0% rate for expulsions, which qualified the campus for this study. The 2013-14 school discipline data was added to further the data analysis by comparing the change in discipline since the 2011-12 CRDC report. In Table 11, Franklin had nearly a 10% increase of OSS with African-American students and a 0% rate for expulsions in the 2013-14 school year (U.S. Department of Education). The CRDC 2013-14 school discipline report corroborated the school leader's perception of how their campus achieved low rates of expulsions with African-American students. Franklin principal stated, "We avoid discrepancies placement unless it's a district mandatory placement."

Braxton High School had a slightly lower rate of disproportionality of African-American students with OSS than Franklin and shared a 0% rate for expulsions (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). African Americans comprised 23.4% of the student population and accounted for 39.10% of the OSS compared to Hispanics at 23.9% and accounted for 25%; Whites at 42.7% and accounted for 27.3%; Asians at 8.9% and accounted for 8.6%; American Indian-Alaska Native at 0.1% and accounted for 0%; Native Hawaiian-Pacific Islander at 0.1% and accounted 0%; and Two or More Races at

0.8% and accounted 0% (U.S. Department of Education). The campus had a 0% rate for expulsions, which qualified the campus for this study. Braxton High School student enrollment increased by nearly 65%; however, the campus had a decrease of 2.2% in OSS with the African-American students and maintained the 0% rate for expulsions in the 2013-14 school year (U.S. Department of Education). The decrease in OSS of African- American students suggest that the school leader's perception of how their campus achieved low rates of expulsions with African-American students maybe accurate. Specifically, the principal mentioned maximizing the seat time for academic performance and he attributed Center For Success as a big part of that achievement.

Lucky High School rate of disproportionality of African-American students with OSS was similar to Braxton and shared a 0% rate for expulsions (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). African Americans comprised 25.8% of the student population and accounted for 41.2% of the OSS compared to Hispanics at 47.2% and accounted for 51.1%; Whites at 20.9% and accounted for 6.1%; Asians at 5.1% and accounted for 1.5%; American Indian-Alaska Native at 0.2% and accounted for 0; and Two or More Races at 0.8% and accounted for 0 OSS (U.S. Department of Education). The campus had a 0% rate for expulsions, which qualified the campus for this study. Lucky High School also decreased the African-American students OSS by 2.2% and maintained the 0% rate for expulsions in the 2013-14 school year (U.S. Department of Education). The decrease in OSS of African-American students suggest that the school leader's perceptions about relationships may have helped the campus achieved the decrease in OSS and 0% rate of expulsions with African-American students.

Sunny High School had the 2nd lowest OSS rate of African-American students among the five schools and ranked 8th among the 89 Texas 5A and 6A high schools with a 16% to 33% African-American student population. Sunny also shared a 0% rate for expulsions (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). African Americans comprised 21% of the student population and accounted for 28.2% of the OSS compared to Hispanics at 54% and accounted for 58.3%; Whites at 15.6% and accounted for 10.5%; Asians at 6.2% and accounted for 1.3%; American Indian-Alaska Native at 0.5% and accounted for 0.2%; Native Hawaiian-Pacific Islander at 0.1% and accounted 0.2%; Two or More Races at 2.2% and accounted for 1.5% (U.S. Department of Education). The campus rate for OSS was 7.2% above the 21% African American student enrollment. The OSS rate and the 0% rate for expulsions qualified the campus for this study. Sunny High School had a 1.5% increase with OSS of African Americans; however, the school still met the less than 10% above the African-American student population threshold. The campus maintained the 0% rate for expulsions in the 2013-14 school year (U.S. Department of Education). The low rates of OSS of African-American students and the 0% expulsions rate suggest that the school leader's perception about the nine-year commitment to PBIS and the habitual use of the VALOR acronym helped the campus achieved the low OSS rate and 0% for expulsions with African-American students.

Victory High School had the lowest OSS rate of African-American students among the five schools and ranked 6th among the 89 Texas 5A and 6A high schools with a 16% to 33% African-American student population. Victory also shared a 0% rate for expulsions (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). African Americans comprised 26.4%

of the student population and accounted for 31.6% of the OSS compared to Hispanics at 65% and accounted for 59.4%; Whites 4.7% and accounted for 5%; Asians at 1.1% and accounted for 0.8%; American Indian-Alaska Native at 0.4% and accounted for 1.2%; Native Hawaiian-Pacific Islander at 0.1% and accounted for 0.4%; and Two or More Races at 1.6% and accounted for 1.6% (U.S. Department of Education). The campus rate for OSS was 4% above the 25.9% African-American student enrollment. The OSS rate qualified the campus for this study. Victory High School had a 8.3% increase with OSS of African Americans and 30.3% decrease in expulsions. While the school did not meet the OSS threshold for the 2013-14 school year, the campus had nearly a 50% decrease with expulsions of African-American students. The campus maintained the 0% rate for expulsions in the 2013-14 school year (U.S. Department of Education). The low rates of OSS of African-American students suggest that school leader's perceptions about the habitual use of CHAMPS, FOUNDATIONS, and Fundamental Five helped the campus achieved the low OSS rate and the decrease in expulsions with African-American students.

Data played a role in several high schools' achievement of low rates of OSS or expulsions of African-American students. Data is a key component in the PBIS framework. The school leaders' perceptions indicated a differ approach to data among the five campuses. One school leader provided detailed information of how her campus' use of data led to the discovery of African-American males not taking AP classes and how economics was a factor. The response included the details of how the school addressed the issue. The students were connect with resources in the community and

taught how to write grants to support their financial needs for the classes. While the findings were different for each school, the school leaders' perceptions were consistent with the triangulated data.

Additional analyses were conducted in search of evidence of a plan for addressing disproportionality in OSS and expulsions of African-American students. No information emerged from any of the high schools in this study depicting discipline data collection on African-American students with an intentional plan or target goal to the reduce the OSS or expulsions. Again, several school leaders' perceptions were that economics instead of culture was the single most important factor impacting students not race. The school leaders' perspectives on poverty was an interesting notion because the research states otherwise. According to Skiba et al. (2002), the student's race overrides forces stemming from socioeconomic status factors such as poverty when researching gaps in school discipline. Monroe (2009) arrived at the same conclusion when looking at middle-income level African-American students school discipline. Addressing poverty along will not cure the disproportionality in school discipline crisis (Noltemeyer & Mcloughlin, 2010).

Noting that both principals who shared that perspective were White, I wondered about the cultural aspect. Reflecting back to the review of literature, the teaching staff in most school districts is predominantly White female. Perhaps mischaracterization and cultural mismatch should be considered as a factor when examining disproportionality in school discipline with African American students. Cultural mismatch or racial stereotyping can contribute to the disproportionality of school discipline with African-

American students (Skiba et al., 2011). Culture is one the themes that overlapped across several themes. It is discussed later in this chapter as it relates to school discipline and CRIL.

The school leaders' perceptions on discipline and how their campuses achieved the low rates OSS or expulsions of African-American students varied. Several school leaders expressed that OSS and expulsions were a last result at their campuses. The cross-analysis of the responses and the OCR school data confirmed some of the school leaders' perceptions. Four of the five high schools had zero expulsions for the 2011-12 and 2013-14 school year. The findings also indicated some inconsistency between the two data sources. The OCR school discipline data indicated that the Franklin high school had zero expulsions for the 2011-12 and 2013-14 and the OSS rates were the highest of the five high schools for both reports (U.S. Department of Education, 2014; U.S. Department of Education, 2016). In Table 10, Franklin principal shared that OSS and expulsions were a last result unless the student's behavior required a mandatory district placement. The principal went on to say that if a student blatantly cussed out a teacher then the student probably would get that placement.

Franklin principal's perception in this case was difficult to analyze for several reasons. First, the principal's use of blatantly cussing out a teacher maybe considered a discretionary discipline placement for OSS or an expulsion. Equating the district level mandatory placement to a TEA PEIMS mandatory placement for blatantly cussing a staff maybe a misconception that contribute to the increase of OSS and expulsions rates with African-American students. Second, the context in which the incident occurs may

need further analysis to understand and interpret if the placement would be mandatory or discretionary. Third, considering that high school students are more likely to use profanity in schools, analyzing the expectations within the PBIS framework of teaching expectations to students and responding in a positive manner that deescalate the behavior must also be taken into account. Finally, evaluating if the schools' response to students using profanity and subsequently being assigned OSS or expelled is more prevalent with African-American students. If so, the school leader should consider how the OCR use of the disparate impact theory could apply.

Similarly, Victory high school discussed their use of attendance contracts, skipping forms, and assigning mentors to students returning from the Discipline Alternative Education Placement (DAEP) to keep students on track. The cross-analysis revealed that Victory high school had the highest disproportionality with expulsions and the lowest rates of OSS with African-American students of the five campuses. The rate of expulsions doubled the African-American student population in 2011-12 at Victory high school. In 2012-13 the expulsions rate decreased by 30%. The results of the findings could not determine if the low OSS rates in 2011-12 or the 30% expulsion rate improvement in 2013-14 were related to the campus PBIS plan. It could not be determined if the results were an intentional PBIS plan or an unconscious positive result. Lucky high school discipline rates were similar to Franklin in 2011-12; however, the school reduced the percentage of OSS with African-American students by 2.2 % (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Once again the results of the finding could not be determined as a result of PBIS implementation.

While this study was not focused on comparing and contrasting the high schools, the discussion of the data and discipline themes naturally prompted the comparison in discussing the findings. Braxton high school student enrollment increased by 65% and the campus successfully reduced the African-American students OSS rate by 2.2% (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Another noteworthy finding from the analysis of the OCR discipline data was the Hispanics student population low rates of OSS and expulsions in all five schools compared to the rates at the national and state levels (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Finally, Sunny high school had the 2nd lowest rate of OSS and presented the most compelling evidence to support the school leader's perceptions that the campus nine years of implementing PBIS with the common language, VALOR, and the PBIS team monthly planning meeting had a direct impact with the campus achieving the low rates of OSS and expulsions.

Research Question 4--To what extent is CRIL included with the implementation of PBIS?

This research question was utilized to determine the extent of CRIL within PBIS implementation. The following four themes emerged from the data: (a) Background and Experience; (b) Culture; (c) Parent Involvement and Community; and the (d) Miscellaneous group. The analysis of the data also showed that culture generated the largest number of school leaders' responses out of the ten themes. Based on the high volume of a responses, additional analysis were conducted of the culture theme and three sub-category themes emerged: (a) Respect and diversity; (b) climate and environment; and (c) race.

A total of 58 responses were analyzed accounting for approximately 30% of the school leaders' responses. The findings indicated that leadership style, vision, and mission were key factors in CRIL with the school leaders in this study.

Background and experience. CRIL require individuals to recognize their own culturally background and knowledge, become aware of the cultural backgrounds of students in the school and incorporate that cultural knowledge into the leadership practices to meet the needs of every student in the school (Monroe, 2009). There were 11 questions on the interview protocol that generated responses regarding CRIL within the PBIS framework. I conducted a cross-analysis of the 11 questions listed below with the school leaders' responses.

1. How is CRIL included in your campus PBIS framework?
2. How do administrators provide support for PBIS and CRIL?
3. How does CRIL fit into needed support for PBIS?
4. What role did PBIS and CRIL play in reducing the rates of OSS and expulsions with African American students?
5. What advice would you provide to other high schools implementing PBIS with CRIL?
6. What if any barriers have you encountered while implementing CRIL?
7. How does your race play a role in implementing CRIL?
8. What percentage of teachers in your building are effectively implementing cultural responsive practices?
9. How are the teachers implementing PBIS and cultural responsive practices?
10. What would you add or do differently if given the opportunity to start over with PBIS and CRIL implementation?
11. If a PBIS/CRIL expert conducted a campus site visit, what would they see?

The school leaders' responses and the findings are discussed according to the four themes. Based on the responses, background and experience were a key factor in the leadership style, visions, and mission for the five campuses. Participant Four and

Participant Seven presented that mindset. One school leader discussed how his first teaching experience was in an inner city school with a nearly 100% Hispanic student population where 95% of the students were poor. He shared how utilizing the Ruby Payne framework for dealing with kids from poverty was paramount to his role of implementing CRIL. The school leader stated,

> I realized that it wasn't about color but about access; about those kids not having access and their parents working hard trying to make a living. They weren't coming to school to advocate for their kids; they just trust that we were going to do the right by their kids and I saw a lot of not doing right by kids when I started teaching at that school.

Another school leader stated, "Being a Black man I can identify with the Black students. Having a lot of the same challenges. My experiences have an impact on some teachers also who may not share my experiences." A similar response from a different school leader, "I am a White male, when dealing with the kids backgrounds, it's important for them to see role models that look like them. I think of that when hiring staff. I look for people who share our vision." A third school leader stated,

> I think knowing the kids, knowing their backgrounds, knowing their parents and actually have a conversation with them. You know better than that. I know you don't do that at home. I know your brother. We have a lot of conversation with kids.

Furthermore, the last school leader stated,

> I think it is shifting the mindset of our teachers. Also, understanding the type of students we serve here at our school; their background and neighborhoods. Knowing that some of our students are economically challenged. Be positive with the kids and build relationship.

The school leaders' perceptions for addressing the systemic disparities that are evident by race and conditions in the community are aligned with the CRIL framework. Through the process of continuous analysis of the school leaders' responses, the findings from this study indicate that the principals have a meaningful impact on CRIL implementation.

There was some overlap between the themes background and experience and race. Several school leaders mentioned that they were cognizant of their race when describing their backgrounds and experiences working with students. The school leaders were passionate when they shared their personal stories of how they relate to students. The findings indicated that the school leaders' perceptions were in alignment with addressing systemic disparities that are evident by race and conditions within the community. The majority of school leaders shared the perceptions that all students should be treated with respect and diversity should be embraced from a culturally responsive approach. There were many great first steps of positive CRIL from the school leaders' perceptions captured in Table 13.

One school leader shared how he made daily announcements on the intercom to promote safety. He highlighted how he recognized the students over the intercom to celebrate their accomplishments with various activities and involvement with clubs and

organizations. Desiring to discover a deeper connection between PBIS and CRIL with the five schools in this study required further analysis of the field notes, questionnaire, and interviews. Sunny high school leader's repeated response about VALOR and the nine years of effective use for promoting a positive environment at the school and in the community surfaced to the top. She discussed how VALOR was an imbedded process in the building that resonated with everything they did. The results indicated that the majority of the high schools implemented isolated culturally responsive practices. Contrastly, the school implementing VALOR was consistent with a systematic, school-wide approach to CRIL within PBIS implementation.

Table 13.

Representative Statements for CRIL (Respect and Diversity)

How is CRIL included in your campus PBIS framework?
1. We are not going to scream at kids.
2. Every kid gets treated with respect and the kids are expected to replicate that philosophy; regardless of if students are African American, gay, or poor, my whole goal as an administrator and principal of this school to develop a culture of acceptance regardless of whom you are.
3. We celebrate diversity here.
4. We don't sacrifice talent for diversity; we are fortunate enough to get both.
5. We have multiple clubs ranging from the African Student Association to Muslin Student Association.
6. We introduce pedagogy that involves a certain ethnicity, gender, and the subject we find it the must durable is in the US History class is one of the ways in which we incorporate.
7. Hiring a wide variety of staff and having a very diverse staff.
8. We make an effort to hire people from various backgrounds and it becomes a good sharing effort when talking about students' behavior.
9. Conversations with responsible. Lots of Conversations and nonjudgmental sharing; Cross-cultural work---English teachers select cultural specific.
10. At the beginning of the year we make it known to teachers the type of students we are serving.
11. We go on a bus tour to highlight the different areas where our students come from so the teachers don't make the assumption that the students know better.
12. It's critical for us to let the teachers know whom the students are that we serve and how to build relationships with them.
13. Ensuring that our teachers know they cannot fit everyone in small box.
14. Utilizing our partnerships and working with the Phoenix house and community in schools.
15. We have our partners working with us. For example, tattoo removals and gang awareness.
16. We are providing a service to students beyond the day-to-day operations of the campus

Culture: Respect and diversity. Culture generated the largest number of responses. Three sub-categories of data are presented with this theme. The school leaders' responses were general across the board responses that centered on showing respect to students and recognizing their diversity. The findings did not indicate any schoolwide approaches to teaching, providing training, assessments and evaluation for continuous improvement with CRIL. The majority of the school leaders expressed that their staff need CRIL training. The high schools had a variety of approaches to implementing CRIL.

Climate and environment. The second sub-category, climate and environment, derived from the school leaders' responses regarding Culture. During the onsite visits, participants shared examples and stories about how the culture at home and school played a role in their leadership. One school leader repeated the story about the campus nine-year commitment to VALOR and how the expectations of VALOR have driven students behavior in a positive manner. The school leader stated,

> VALOR—Value, Aspire, Lead, Own, and Respond. Valor is an important concept we taught and revisited. We use it on also of our t-shirts, it's on our uniforms, on the hallways, we talk about VALOR in the classroom, in the lunchroom, and in the hallway. VALOR in the community because is important because I have kids who have graduated and say they took VALOR with them. I carried my VALOR with me to college. It is an imbedded process in this building, it truly permeate the entire building. The senior year I give out the VALOR award. We were the top participant in the Heart Walks and raised the

most money. Valuing your community and giving back to your community; leading by examples.

Another school leader talked about safety and stated, "Everyday I get on the PA system and tell our kids if anyone bothers you, threaten you or make you feel uncomfortable, come and tell somebody and let us know. I reiterate the fact that bullying is not acceptable." A third school leader stated,

> Our goal is to involve the students in a variety of activities; the more activities they are involved with the less likely they are to have issues or get off track. We have Anime Club, the Video Game Club, and Comedy Club, something everyone. We have groups that do a lot of different things—The GENTS, Madame Mademoiselles.

The school leaders' perceptions were parallel to the U.S. Department of Education (2014) guiding principle one; create a positive school climate. Although, the analysis of this section indicated that while a variety of culturally related activities were occurring, only one school leader indicated a systematic, school-wide approach to CRIL within PBIS implementation.

Race. The third sub-category, race, derived from the responses regarding the following two questions from the interview:

1. How does your race play a role in implementing PBIS?
2. How does your race play a role in implementing CRIL?

The findings form the school leaders' responses suggest that race does matter when implementing CRIL. The majority of the principals shared stories or reflections about

how their race impact their campuses. The school leaders' responses to the interview question regarding race are listed in Table 14.

Furthermore, the overlap of race that showed up within every theme suggests that race is a factor that should be considered when implementing PBIS with CRIL. There were two questions that directly inquired about the role of race with PBIS and CRIL. The findings suggested that the school leaders in this study were aware of their own cultural backgrounds and recognized the impact it had on their leadership. The school leaders' perceptions indicated that race plays a role in PBIS implementation. Further research is needed to determine the extent of that role.

Likewise, the findings for a CRIL component within the PBIS framework and the impact that race have on OSS and expulsions of African-American students are inclusive. The analysis of the data revealed that several key guidelines for implementing PBIS with CRIL maybe missing from the majority of the high schools in this study. No evidence of a systematic, school-wide approach with an intentional plan to ensure fairness, equity, and continuous improvement through ongoing evaluation of African-American students emerged from the five high schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2014).

Table 14.

Representative Statements for CRIL (Race)

How does your race play a role in implementing CRIL?
1. Although, I had dealt with race-- I always had a diverse group of friends. I grew up on military base and went to school with a lot of African American kids, Pilipino kids, and a few Hispanic kids most of them all live together. They weren't rich but had good medical care, housing, and food but that was my 1st experience to deal with extremely poor kids. I was very uneducated on dealing with poverty. That for me is the biggest barrier to education.
2. It's a lot being a Black male running a school like this. The largest school in the district, probably the most academically successful in the district. There is a high level of expectations. For the kids and the parents, they see how I interact with them and I serve as a role model. Many times parents come into the school thinking that they are not going to get a fair chance for whatever reason; a lot of times because they didn't have a positive experience when they were in school. Seeing me if nothing else gives them the idea that I understand because I am Black which it doesn't always work that way but at least they in come thinking they can eliminate the thought that it because of my race.
3. I can identify with a lot of students that we serve because I grew up in poverty. Through that identification process, I empathize but I still hold them accountable. I try to let them know that getting a quality education levels the playing field. If they are in situation now that they don't like being in rather it be economic, or not liking where they live that they have the power to change that. Getting a quality education, follow the rules and go to college or some type of post secondary education you can change your situation. Being a Black man I can share my story of how overcame certain things.
4. I think my race, age, and economics all play a role. I must be very thoughtful about people with whom I work and the children whom I deal with. I am very conscientious of that because I am very different from my campus. I am not from Texas, I am female and I am White and older. I went to Vanderbilt, which was a very White wing school and it makes me very conscientious.
5. Race matters. Our school is about 95% African American and Hispanic combined, about 4 or 5% Asian and White combined, and 75% low income. I definitely think race matters. We have some of our organizations that are completely Hispanic and some that are totally Black but we need that. We have teachers that reflect those kids working with those kids and I think that is important. I don't have students complaining about racism.
6. I think Race does matter; I am not going to say I don't see race. I see African American kids. I see Hispanic kids and I see Anglo kids. I see all of these kids as my kids at Victory Senior High School. I think race is important and I think kids need to see people that reflect them; they need to see that positivity.

Parent Involvement and Community. Parent Involvement and Community is the finally theme to present findings with this research questions. I considered the school leaders' stories and responses to the interview protocol questions as evidence to confirm CRIL implementation with PBIS. Once again, the findings indicated gaps within some schools' PBIS frameworks. The parent involvement and community theme emerged from a variety of questions from the interview protocol. One school leader's response was to the barrier encountered with PBIS and CRIL implementation. The participant stated,

> Any kid who does not have a significant adult role model to advocate for them when things go wrong it's easier to punish that child. If you have a parent that is going to question you about what you are doing with their kid, you are going to make sure you did your investigation to the fullest extent that you can. If you have a kid with no adult role model or significant figure in their life, and you are going to suspend them; no one was going to say anything than it is easier to do that. We have to think in the role of advocacy for kids to make sure that doesn't take place. It is important that every child is given the same due diligent when dealing with their situation.

The analysis of several school leaders' responses suggest that the Superintendent play a major role with parental and community involvement. Victory high school leader discussed that CHAMPS and FOUNDATIONS were the district-wide framed works for PBIS. He stated,

> Lead by example. Our Superintendent has a culture of interactions that includes the community and we consider that philosophy when hiring individuals. We do home visits and attend funerals to make sure our teachers are sensitive to and provide opportunities to help students be successful. The Fundamental Five improvement initiative has a recognition component. We recognize and praise kids for during what they are suppose to do. We had a kid out in the community that pumped the gas of an officer that was involved in a shooting or something. The kid just walked up to the officer and said let me pump this for you; it made national news. We called the kid up and talked about the event on the intercom. Also, we went to his JROTC class and reward him in front of his classmates. It's not just a campus deal; it's really a district deal.

Sunny high school leader also stated that PBIS was a district driven initiative. Many of the school leader's responses included the campus use of the acronym VALOR. Unlike the district-wide approach to PBIS, the other three schools had complete control over what program or components of a program their campuses utilized for PBIS. The majority of the school leaders also expressed that parental involvement was important. Their responses indicated a high commitment to communicating with parents and including them with the process of dealing with situation regarding their students. The final response for this theme was from Victory high school associate principal regarding the district's school status program. He stated,

> The district has a program called School Status. The School Status program allows us to go back and listen to the conversations that the teachers are having

with the parents regarding the students' progress and behavior. These conversations are very helpful for training purposes as well as to impact instructions.

The findings in this section suggest that components of CRIL are evident in all five schools and one of the high schools had a plan for getting parents involved with the school that was school-wide and district supported.

Miscellaneous

There were four note cards that did not fit any of the other nine themes during the analysis of the school leaders' responses; therefore, a miscellaneous theme emerged. The section was created to promote transparency by including all of the data from the semi-recorded interviews. Multiple analyses of the school leaders' responses in this section were conducted to ensure that the response did not fit into another theme. The school leaders' responses were generic and none of the responses were connected. Two of the responses were well wishes to me well with the study. Another school leader expressed her gratitude for being principal at Sunny High School. She stated,

> I think my experience here has made me a better person. I am very conscientious of how lucky I am that I was placed in these positions. I try to learn from that every solitary day or you can fall into the stereotype trap. I am a classic; I could have fallen into the Southern Bell—"Do it my way or the highway. However, I am grateful everyday for the kids I encounter and the adults I work with. Working with other individuals who are like me and watching their growth is

truly amazing. It's a true honor being in this community and serving these kids. We hire our own kids and that's a neat experience.

The final card included a school leader's response about the district's endorsement for CTE certifications. He stated,

> The average annual salary of our families is approximately $30,000. This is why our superintendent pushes certification; they monitor it and the number we have. There is a big celebration and meeting in the auditorium for all students who earn CTE certifications. The students earn a CTE cord and the CTE cords are the only non-academic cords that can be worn at graduation.

Because multiple interpretations can exist, the verbatim description of the school leaders' responses were highlighted in this section to provide all the data for accuracy with presenting the findings.

Summary

Chapter IV included an overview of the study, demographics of the study, descriptions of the sites, analysis and discussion of the data by research question. I introduced the data results to this phenomenological qualitative research study. The findings from the principals' perceptions were presented within the following themes: (a) Training and Implementation; (b) Hiring Practices and Leadership; (c) Relationships; (d) Learning and Academics; (e) Data; (f) Discipline; (h) Background and Experience; (i) Culture; (j) Parent Involvement and Community; and (k) Miscellaneous. Also, Culture, had three sub-category themes to emerge: (a) Respect and Diversity; (b)

Climate and Environment; and (c) Race. The next chapter presents the Summary and Implications.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

The 40-year phenomenon of African-American students being disproportionately represented in OSS and expulsions as compared to White students (U.S. Department of Education, 2014; Skiba et al., 2014; Losen, 2015; Butler et al., 2012; Fabelo et al., 2011; Skiba et al, 2011; Skiba et. al., 2002; Children's Defense Fund, 1975) prompted me to conduct this research. African-American students are 3.8 times more likely to be suspended and 1.9 more likely to expelled from school than White students (U.S. Department of Education, 2016; 2014; Skiba et al., 2014; Losen, 2015; Fabelo et al., 2011; Skiba et al, 2011; Skiba et. al., 2002; Children's Defense Fund, 1975). I was particularly interested the role of PBIS and CRIL in reducing OSS and expulsions of African-American students from the perspective of the school leaders. This chapter is divided into two parts: (a) Summary of the findings and (b) implications for practitioners and researchers.

Summary of Findings

The purpose of the study was to determine the extent of PBIS and CRIL implementation in large Texas high schools with low rates of OSS or expulsions of African-American students from the school leaders' perspectives. The research questions that were answered are:

1. To what extent is PBIS implemented in schools with low suspension rates of OSS or expulsions of African-American students?

2. What are the school leaders' perceptions on effective implementation of PBIS?

3. How do the school leaders perceive OSS and expulsions of African-American students in relation to PBIS?

4. To what extent is CRIL included in the implementation of PBIS?

In this study, I examined PBIS and CRIL in large Texas high schools with low rates of OSS and expulsions of African-American students from the school leaders' perception. I analyzed the principals' demographic data from the online questionnaire and utilized the pre-existing school campus data to determine if demographics had any implication on PBIS and CRIL implementation. The OCR school discipline data on the five high schools for the 2011-12 and 2013-14 school year was disaggregated and analyzed for comparison purposes. After analysis of the transcribed interviews from the seven participants in the study, the findings were presented in Chapter IV.

Ten themes and three sub-category themes emerged from the school leaders' responses. The results from the findings indicated that there were different types and levels of PBIS implementation at the five high schools, school leaders' perceptions were similar in some areas of PBIS and varied in other areas. The campuses achieved the low rates of OSS and expulsions with African-American students in various ways, and the school leaders' approach to CRIL implementation within the PBIS framework varied across the five high schools. There was some evidence in the findings that supported the school leaders' perceptions that PBIS implementation and CRIL contributed to the campuses achievement of low rates of OSS or expulsions of African-American students.

Implications

Principals and school leaders play a critical role in promoting positive school climates that engage all students. The school leaders should model, encourage, provide training and reinforcements as the support system for PBIS with CRIL. According to Skiba et al. (2014), school perspectives and practices are the most powerful predictors of suspension and disproportionality in suspensions. Addressing the 40-year phenomenon disproportionality in school discipline with African-American students require some authentic work and a long-term commitment (U.S. Department of Education, 2014; Skiba et al., 2014; Losen, 2015; Butler et al., 2012; Fabelo et al., 2011; Skiba et al, 2011; Skiba et. al., 2002; Children's Defense Fund, 1975). School leaders can utilize TEA PEIMS and the OCR school discipline data to assess campus discipline data. Reviewing the campus data and school level policies can provide insight to the areas school leaders should focus their attention.

Referring back to Franklin High School's disproportionality in OSS, the school leaders are presented with an opportunity to challenge the school level policies that maybe contributing to the over representation of OSS for African American students. For instance, the principal's example of cussing a teacher out as a mandatory OSS or expulsions presents an opportunity for the school leader to challenge the school level policies by looking for the precursors to student behaviors and provide responsive practices versus punitive consequences. The disparate impact theory summons us to challenge the policies that disproportionately impact a protected group (U.S. Department of Education, 2014; Martin, 2012). During my first year as an assistant principal at a

large Texas high school, I processed over 8,000 discipline referrals. African-American and Latino students accounted for the majority of the discipline referrals. On the surface, it appeared that the students were not following the rules. Upon reviewing the discipline data and the facts pertaining to the incidents a little closer, I discovered that the majority of the referrals were for disrespect, insubordination, and failure to follow directives. The investigations revealed that the responses to the student behaviors encountered a great deal of subjectivity.

Desiring to change the trend, I requested permission to implement a conflict resolution program. The school leaders approved my request and politely informed me that I would keep all of my other assigned duties. Utilizing my counseling background, the following year, I implemented a conflict resolution program that included weekly teen talks on various topics. Students with the greatest number of discipline referrals and students who were expelled to the alternative learning center for insubordination the previous school year were targeted to participate with the program. The purpose of the program was to be proactive and implement a prevention based approach that addressed the problem areas with student behaviors. The goal of the program was to motivate students to take self-control of their behavior by responding to a difficult situation in a positive manner. The conflict resolution program included social skills training, character education, self-management, and leadership. The students participated with various activities such as mentoring, peer-mediation, role-playing, motivational speaking, and teen group talks. The students enrolled in the program had a 50% to 100% decrease in discipline referrals.

The school leaders were also committed to providing ongoing CHAMPS and FOUNDATIONS trainings. Every teacher, school leader, and bus driver received training. PBIS is a research proven strategy for reducing OSS and expulsions (Flannery et al., 2013; Miller, 2012; Handler et al., 2007). In this real life applications, two important factors are highlighted: (a) data-driven analysis for culturally responsive interventions and (b) a school-wide plan for PBIS. There are some common components of PBIS that transcend across schools (Miller). Before implementing PBIS, school leaders must include some key steps in the implementation plan to achieve the goal of reducing OSS and expulsions of African-American students. First, hiring the right principal and staff for the campus has to be top priority. Second, develop an implementation plan for training all stakeholders. Third, include an intentional plan for CRIL as part of the PBIS framework. Fourth, create an evaluation plan for monitoring and continuous improvement.

Hiring. Effective leadership at the top is crucial; therefore, the principal should possess the required qualifications, background, experiences, and most importantly a proven track record of effectively working with African-American students as evidence by tangible results. The principal must have a vision as to how he or she sees the campus reducing the disproportionality in school discipline. Also, the principal must understand the functionality of the campus, the organizational and power structures, and have knowledge about the staff skill level with PBIS and CRIL. The principal must hire staff based on the criteria needed to fulfill the vision for the school and provide appropriate

training. The principal should be the instructional leader that drives the school mission. If a change in principal has to occur, it must be the duty of the school district to ensure that the "right fit" candidate is placed at the school. The findings in this study suggest that the principals hold the keys to successful PBIS with CRIL implementation.

There are several moving parts that must occur to ensure implementation with fidelity. The staff, students, families, and all stakeholders should be involved with developing the climate goals that compliment the school's academic goals. There should be clear and concise expectations that everyone can follow. The complexity of school system make it difficult to pinpoint the shortage without an intentional focus on the goal. As a former practitioner in the field, I have observed the cycle of failures that can occur when district hiring practices are not aligned with PBIS—CRIL framework. If given an opportunity to be promoted to principal, most candidates will not say, "I don't think I am the best candidate for the job". Therefore, those in charged of the hiring must be qualified to hire the right people. The positions cannot be filled based on "who you know" and bureaucracy. When positions are filled with this type of leadership the principal can have misguided loyalty to that hiring power rather than the needs of the campus and the cycle of failures will continue.

Training. Training the staff in PBIS and CRIL is the second step. If this phenomenon has existed for over 40 years, it will not be fixed in one to five years. Start with a three-year goal for providing annual trainings and small follow-up trainings during the school year. There are many research proven PBIS implementation plans available to high schools. Based on the research in the literature and my experience

implementing PBIS and CRIL, I recommend including the following five components for effective implementation of PBIS: (a) Develop a long-term implementation plan for annual trainings for all stakeholders and specified trainings throughout the year; (b) create a data-driven PBIS team that meets at least monthly; (c) assign an administrator liaison to provide administrator support and drive accountability; (d) establish campus guidelines for success; and (e) conduct an annual evaluation and assessment of the PBIS plan (OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2015; Sprick, 2009).

PBIS-CRIL Framework Model

In Figure 8, a seven-step PBIS-CRIL framework model is displayed for practitioners to utilize with implementing a district-wide or campus-wide plan. Placing the implementation plan first and highlighting the role of top-down leadership with PBIS-CRIL communicates the district or campus level commitment to PBIS. Establishing buy-in is crucial to effective implementation (Flannery et al., 2013; Sprick, 2009; Handler et al., 2007). Outlining how PBIS-CRIL is connected to learning and the school culture provide the purpose for initiative (Flannery et al. 2013; Bambara, Nonnemacher, & Kern, 2009; Handler et al., 2007). The second step is to allow data to drive the PRIS-CRIL initiative. If the data indicate that African-American males have higher rates of OSS than other student groups, disaggregate the data to develop interventions that supports reducing the OSS rates. This is where the monthly PBIS team meetings can be highly effective; interpreting the data and developing positive interventions to address the data concern would be a primary focus for the PBIS team (Sprick, 2009; Handler et al. 2007 Bambara et al., 2009).

Before getting to step three, training and administrator support must be well established for PBIS-CRIL to be effective (Sprick, 2009; Handler et al., 2007). I would argue that administrator specific trainings are needed at both levels. Assessing school leaders' experience with PBIS and CRIL should be a part of the hiring practices. When teachers and administrators are hired who are familiar with implementing PBIS and CRIL, the capacity to yield a higher rate of implementation with fidelity increases (OSEP Technical Assistance Center on PBIS, 2015; Sprick 2009). Furthermore, step three should include PBIS-CRIL training for everyone with a plan for follow-up trainings. Step four is developing campus expectations. Student learning should be the core of any PBIS-CRIL plan. Leveraging academic themes and goals with the PBIS-CRIL implementation plan promotes clarity with purpose and increase buy-in. Ensuring that all stakeholders are involved with the process is the goal. Building capacity and sustainability of PBIS-CRIL requires an effective PBIS-CRIL team (Bambara et al., 2009; Handler et al., 2007). Step five is the launch of PBIS-CRIL implementation. Be careful not to compromise the integrity of the PBIS-CRIL training. Reducing the training time or omitting key training components of the PBIS-CRIL can lead to death on arrival with the PBIS initiative. PBIS-CRIL trainers should be highly qualified, skilled, and engaging when providing the training. Data outcomes, step six, should be a combination of assessing the achievement of the implementation plan and measuring the predicted outcomes. If the campus objective is to reduce OSS suspensions of African-American students, the PBIS-CRIL plan should include the current data on African-American students' OSS, and the predicted decrease and anticipated outcome impact that can

measured in the evaluation phase. The final step, annual evaluation, should be a comprehensive plan to evaluate the PBIS-CRIL framework. The expectations for each stakeholder and the accountability measures should be communicated during the launch. The success and failures of the implementation should be shared and discussed with stakeholders. The plan for sustainability and building capacity with the PBIS-CRIL framework model should be discussed at the end and beginning of each school year to make continuous improvements.

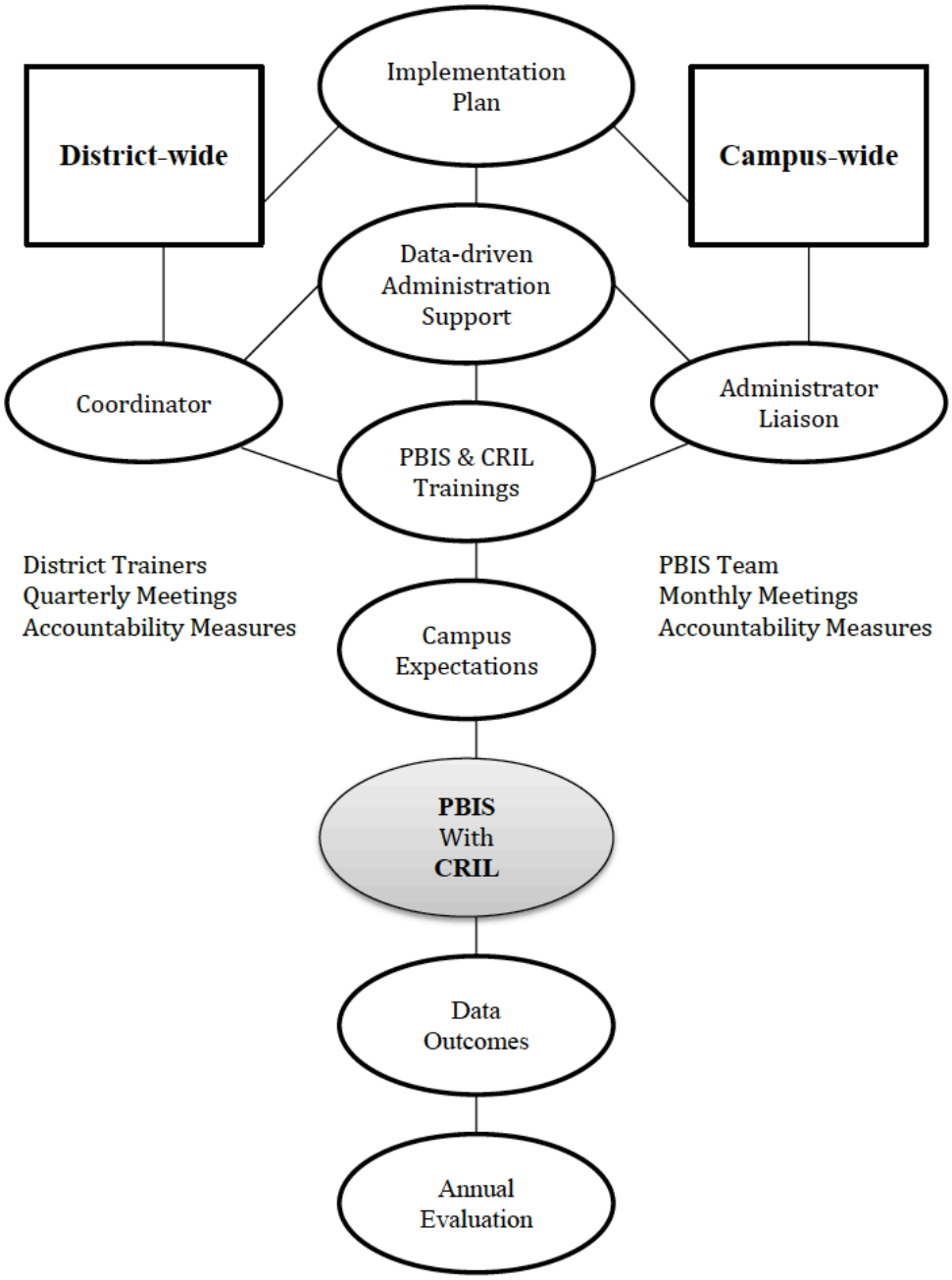

Figure 8. Harper's PBIS-CRIL model

Recalling the pitfalls I experienced as a district administrator implementing a PBIS framework, I also recommend that educators: (a) align PBIS goals with campus or district goals; (b) develop a detailed professional development training plan that include staff buy-in strategies, campus or district expectations, a PBIS team, administrative support, recognitions and rewards; (c) an accountability system for monitoring and providing feedback; and (d) data collection method for collecting implementation and outcome data. The federal government's guiding principles for improving school climate and discipline are another great resource for educators to consider when developing a PBIS plan. The guiding principles include the following: (a) Create positive climates and focus on prevention; (b) develop clear and consistent expectations and consequences; and (c) ensure fairness, equity, and continuous improvement (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Finally, incorporate the OCR school data report with the ongoing evaluation and campus assessment of PBIS.

Intentional plan for CRIL**.** CRIL should take actions to address the following questions: (a) What are we doing to address African-American student discipline and academic performance? (b) How are the teachers encouraging African-American students to use their prior knowledge to connect the learning to real life? (c) How are we addressing the depressed social conditions that housing, mental health, and other systemic policies have on educating African-American students? Poverty and lack of environmental opportunities are not the only factors contributing to the failures of African-American students; culturally irrelevant pedagogy and lack of cultural responsive school environments are also key players that contribute to African-American

students failure in schools. The question that may come to the minds of many teachers is, "How do I teach my other students if I am changing the way I teach for some?" Several possibilities that CRIL may include: (a) Shift the focus away from seeing students as deficit to reflecting on the current state of students in their classrooms (Delpit, 2006). (b) Create a platform for teachers to take note of the systemic policies that may be contributing to African-American students' failures (Gay, 2013).

Evaluation plan for promoting equity among African-American students.

School leaders can start the platform of continuous improvement of African-American student outcomes by utilizing OCR Educational Equity Report to ensure fairness and equity (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). The purpose of the report is to promote transparency with educational excellence and ensure equal access by enforcing federal civil rights laws (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). The OCR publishes the list of schools under investigation and the resolution agreements. School leaders' regular evaluation of campus policy and reviewing OCR cases will provide a unique opportunity for school to ensure compliance and improve campus trainings (U.S. Department of Education). Over 500 resolutions can be accessed on the OCR's website for school leaders to see what schools are required to do for compliance with civil rights laws (U.S. Department of Education).

In Figure 9, the 2013-14 school year Educational Equity Report information for the three school district's of the high schools in this study disproportionality with gifted and talented programs by race and ethnicity are highlighted (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). African-American students were underrepresented in the gifted and

talented programs and two of the school districts had very high disproportionality of African-American and Hispanic students attending schools that did not have gifted and talented programs (U.S. Department of Education). Getting to the root of the equity problem with academic resources will promote better academic and discipline outcomes with African-American students. Victory high school's district in graph three of Figure 9 had the lowest disproportionality at three percent lower than the African-American student enrollment of the other three school districts (U.S. Department of Education). The other four high schools' districts were nine to ten percent underrepresented of African-American students in gifted and talented programs in graphs one and two (U.S. Department of Education). Victory high school's district provided the same gifted and talented programs at all of the district schools (U.S. Department of Education).

Identifying these educational equity issues that contribute the disparate impact of African-American students present school leaders with opportunities to restore what was lost. Providing inventions equipped with elevated opportunities for African-American students to participate with rigorous curriculum and programs with equal access to the gifted and talented curriculum should be a demand. Restorative practices designed to build relationships with students will help to repair the harm created by structural failures. Activities such as the teen group talks provide student voice with the restorative practices. The equity indicators highlighted in the OCR Educational Equity Report, OCR school discipline data and the school level policies should be analyzed and evaluated annually for comprehensive school plan for addressing the disproportionality in school discipline of African-American students.

Figure 9. OCR Educational Equity School Districts Report. (Reprinted from U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights report, 2016.)

Furthermore, when schools leaders work collaboratively with students, families, and the community to build the organization structure rather than "tell" students, parents, and the community what is best practices then they are culturally responsive. Reflecting on the challenges educators sometimes discover as part of a student's life and seeking ways to address social conditions that impact learning is the reality of many school leaders. Cultural responsive practices can be difficult to define or interpret the meaning. The "good news" is there is no single right way of being culturally responsive. The fundamentals are building authentic relationships, knowing your students, and being aware of the communities from which they come. Ladson-Billings' (2009) "*We are family"* approach maybe away to connect with the students.

When I was a high school teacher, I took great pride in decorating my entire door and classroom for every holiday, special event, or celebrations. Building relationships with students and sharing my knowledge to teach them was the number one priority. I enjoyed sharing a piece of my life with the students. I started the year with a birthday display as way to acknowledge everyone's birthday including my birthday for us to get to know each other. Also, I created displays on my door for Valentine's Day which included a special valentine for each student; the Easter display consisted of a basket of eggs with each student's favorite colored egg autographed with their name; Thanksgiving a turkey with some type of depiction of each student so the class could guess which turkey represented each person; Candy canes or stockings for Christmas; and other rituals for special events. I believe it is crucial for students to feel like they are

a part of the classroom and *"We are family"* approach is way that educators may achieve that goal (Ladson-Billings, 2009).

This approach is sometimes utilized in team sports. For example, my daughter was a dedicated cheerleader for over 12 years. Throughout that time she had been one or maybe three at the most African-American cheerleaders on a squad of 15—24 girls with the majority of the members being White students. The family approach of building relationships both on and outside of team events created a since of family that afforded the teams great success with their endeavors. That experience serves as a reminder about the importance of educators connecting with the students they teach and the power of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Although there is evidence to support that PBIS and CRIL are effective frameworks for reducing OSS and expulsions of African-American students, more research is needed on the context of how CRIL is imbedded in high schools PBIS frameworks (Banks & Obiakor, 2015; Losen, 2015; Boneshefski & Runge, 2014; U. S. Department of Education, 2014; Vincent et al., 2011; and Dee & Boyle, 2006). The findings from this study will add to the literature and provide insight from the school leaders' perceptions on how to obtain low rates of OSS and expulsions of African-American students. The OCR releasing the school discipline data every two years also provide an opportunity for community leaders to work in collaboration with the schools to address the disproportionality phenomenon. Presenting the OCR school data to the public and utilizing the disparate impact theory to change policies and practices that contribute to the disproportionality of African-American students is going beyond the

numbers and taking action.

Furthermore, research proven strategies on how to effectively implement Harper's PBIS-CRIL model are highlighted for educators who maybe looking for positive ways to respond to student misbehaviors. Theoretical implications could include expounding on the school leaders' perceptions on hiring practices, race, and socioeconomic factors as related to disproportionality in OSS and expulsions of African-American students. Fidelity of implementation with Harper's PBIS-CRIL model required multiple checkpoints. The analysis of the data presented consistent findings that indicated PBIS with CRIL were factors in the five Texas high schools achieving the low OSS or expulsions rates of African-American students. While, this study may not be generalized across all high schools, there are malleable components that Harper's PBIS-CRIL model can be utilized with for implementation at schools. Future research on high schools implementing Harper's PBIS-CRIL framework model would provide more conclusive findings on the role of PBIS and CRIL in reducing OSS and expulsions of African-American students.

REFERENCES

Akom, A.A. (2008). Ameritocracy and infra-racial racism: Racializing social and cultural reproduction theory in the twenty-first century. *Race, Ethnicity & Education*, 11(3), 205-230.

Alexander, M. (2012). *The New Jim Crow*. New York, NY: New Press.

American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on School Health (2003). Out-of-school suspension and expulsion. *Pediatrics,* 112(5), 1206-1209.

Bambara, L. M., Nonnemacher, S., & Kern, L. (2009). Sustaining school-based individualized positive behavior support: Perceived barriers and enablers. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 11, 161-176. doi:10.1177/1098300708330878

Banks, T. & Obiakor, F. E. (2015). Culturally Responsive Positive Behavior Supports: Considerations for practice, *Journal of Education and Training Studies,* 3(2), 83-90.

Belton, R. (1990). The dismantling of the Griggs disparate impact theory and the future of Title VII: The need for a third reconstruction, *Yale Law & Policy Review*, 8(2), 223-256.

Bradshaw, C. P., Mitchell, M. M., O'Brennan, L. M., & Leaf, P. J. (2010). Multilevel exploration of factors contributing to the overrepresentation of Black students in office disciplinary referrals. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 102*(2), 508-520. doi:10.1037/a0018450

Butler, B. R., Lewis, C. W., Moore III, J. L., & Scott, M. E. (2012). Assessing the odds:

Disproportional discipline practices and implications for educational stakeholders. *Journal of Negro Education,* 81(1), 11-24.

Bolman, L. G. & Deal, T. E. (2008). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Boneshefski, M. & . Runge, T. (2014). Addressing disproportionate discipline practices within a school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports framework: A practical guide for calculating and using disproportionality rates. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions,* 16(3) 149–158.

Children's Defense Fund. (1975). School suspensions: Are they helping children? Cambridge: MA: Washington Research Project.

Cramer E. & Bennett, K. (2015). Implementing culturally responsive positive behavior interventions and supports in middle school classrooms. *Middle School Journal,* 46(3), 18-24.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approache*s. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Davis Ganao, J. S., Suero Silvestre, F., & Glenn, J. W. (2013). Assessing the differential impact of contextual factors on school suspension for Black and White Students. *Journal of Negro Education, 82*(4), 393-407.

Debnam, K. J., Pas, E. T., & Bradshaw, C. P. (2013). Factors influencing staff perceptions of administrator support for Tier 2 and 3 Interventions: A

multilevel perspective. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 21*(2), 116-126.

Dee, C., & Boyle, J. (2006). *Positive behavioral supports (PBS): Tips for parents and Educator.* Retrieved from

Delpit, L. (2006). *Other People's Children.* New York: New Press.

Erlandson, D. A., Harris, E. L., Skipper, B. L. & Allen, S.D. (1993*). Doing naturalistic inquiry. A guide to methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Fabelo, T., Thompson, M.D., Plotkin, M., Carmichael, D., Marchbanks III, M.P., & Booth, E.A.(2011). *Breaking schools'rules: A statewide study of how school discipline relates to students' success and juvenile justice involvement*. New York: Council of State Governments Justice Center.

Flannery, K. Fenning, P., Kato, M., & McIntosh, K. (2013). Effects of school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports and fidelity of implementation on problem behavior in high schools. *School Psychology Quarterly,* 29(2), 111-124.

Freire, P. (2010). *Pedagogy of the oppressed.* New York: Continuum International Publishing Group Inc.

Gay, G. (2013). Teaching to and through cultural diversity. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 43(1), 48-70.

Gibson, P. A., Wilson, R., Haight, W., Kayama, M., & Marshall, J. M. (2014). The role of race in the out-of-school suspensions of Black students: The perspectives of students with suspensions, their parents and educators. *Children & Youth Services Review, 47*, 274-282. doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2014.09.020

Good, T., Nichols, S. L. (2001). Expectancy effects in the classroom: A special focus on improving the reading performance of minority students in first-grade classrooms. *Educational Psychologist,* 36(2), 113-126.

Goodman, S. (1985). The University Interscholastic League of Texas: who are these guys and what can they do? *St. Mary's Law Journal,*16, 979-1014.

Goss, A.C. (2015). Toward a village consciousness: Organizing in the African American cultural tradition. *Journal of Black Studies,* 46(8), 797–816.

Gregory, A., Bell, J., & Pollock, M. (2014). How educators can eradicate disparities in school discipline: A briefing paper on school-based interventions. *Indiana University*. Bloomington, Indiana.

Gregory, A., & Mosely, P. M. (2004). The discipline gap: Teachers' views on the over-representation of African American students in the discipline system. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 37*(1), 18-30. doi:10.1080/10665680490429280.

Gṛegory, A., Skiba, R. J., & Noguera, P. A. (2010). The achievement gap and the discipline Gap: Two sides of the same coin? *Educational Researcher,* 39(1), 59-68. doi:10.3102/0013189X09357621.

Haight, W., Gibson, P. A., Kayama, M., Marshall, J. M. & Wilson, R., (2014). An ecological-systems inquiry into racial disproportionalities in out-of-school suspensions from youth, caregiver and educator perspectives. *Children & Youth Services Review,* 46, 128-138. doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2014.08.003

Handler, M. W., Rey, J., Connell, J., their, K., Feinberg, A., & Putnam, R. (2007). Practical considerations in creating schoolwide positive behavior support in public schools. *Psychology in Schools, 44(1), 29-39.*

Hanley, J. (1999). Beyond the tip of the iceberg: Five stages toward cultural competence. *Reaching Today's Youth,* 3(2), 9-12.

Hanley, M.S. and Noblit, G. W. (2009). *Cultural responsiveness, racial identity and academic success*: A Review of Literature.

Harris, J.D., Quatman, C.E., Manning, M.M., Siston, R. A., & Flanigan, D.C. (2013). How to write a systematic review. *The American Journal of Sports Medicine,* 42(11) 2761-2768.

Higgins, J., & Green, S. (Ed.). (2011). *Cochrane handbook for systematic reviews of interventions* (5.1st ed.). UK: The Cochrane Collaboration.

Hoffman-Miller, P. (2009). The role of principals' ethnicity and gender in the suspension of African American students. *National Forum of Educational Administration & Supervision Journal,* 26(3), 62-80.

Kennedy, M. J., Mimmack, J., & Flannery, K. B. (2012). Innovation in data-driven decision making within SWPBIS systems: Welcome to the gallery walk. *Beyond Behavior,* 21(3), 8-14.

Khan, K.S., Kunz, R., Kleijnen, J., Antes, G. (2003). Five steps to conducting a systematic review. *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine,* 96(3), 118-121.

Klingner, J., Artiles, A., Kozleski, E., Harry, B., Zion, S., Tate, W., Duran, G. & Riley, D. (2005). Addressing the disproportionate representation of culturally and

linguistically diverse students in special education through culturally responsive educational systems. Education Policy Analysis Archives, 13(38). Retrieved from http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v13n38.

Kyckelhahn, T., Martin, T. (2013). Justice expenditures and employment extracts, 2010—Preliminary." Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC. Retrieved from http://www.bjs.gov/.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). *The Dreamkeepers*: *Successful teachers of African American children.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Ladson-Billings, G. & Tate, W. (1995). Toward a critical race theory of education. *Teachers College Record,* 97(1), 47-68.

Lincoln, Y. S. & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry.* Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Losen, D. J. (2015). *Closing the school discipline gap: Equitable remedies for excessive exclusion*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Losen, D. J. (2013). Discipline, policies, successful schools, racial justice, and the law. *Family Court Review*, 51(3), 388-400.

Losen, D. J. & Gillespie, J. (2012). Opportunities suspended: The disparate impact of disciplinary exclusion from school. *K-12 Racial Disparities in School Discipline.* Retrieved from http://escholarship.org/uc/item/3g36n0c3

Lunenburg, F. & Irby, B. (2008). *Writing a successful thesis or dissertation: Tips and strategies for students in social and behavioral sciences.* Thousand Oaks, CA.

Corwin Press.

McDonnell, L. M. and Elmore, R. F. (1987). Getting the job done: Alternative policy instruments. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 9(2), 133-152.

McIntosh, K., Girvan, E.J., Horner, R. H., & Smolkowski, K. (2014). Education not incarceration: A conceptual model for reducing racial and ethnic disproportionality in school discipline. *The Journal of Applied Research on Children: Informing Policy for Children at Risk*, 5(2), 1-24.

Marshall, C. & Oliva, M. (2010). *Leadership for social justice: Making revolutions in education* (pp. 315-327). Boston, MASS: Allyn & Bacon.

Martin, J.R. (2012). Civil Rights: School discipline disparate impact. *Engage,* 13(1), 30-36.

Martin, J. & Sugarman, J. (1993). Models of classroom management. 2nd Edition. Bellingham, Washington: Temeron Books Inc.

Mayfield, V & Garrison-Wade (2015). Culturally responsive practices as whole school reform. *Journal of Instructional Pedagogies,*16, 1-17.

Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Metropolitan Center for Urban Education (2008). Culturally responsive classroom management Strategies. New York University. Retrieved from http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/uploads/005/121/Culturally%20Responsive%20Classroom%20Mgmt%20Strat2.pdf.

Miller, J. D. (2012). *The Effect of Leadership for Positive Behavior Intervention and Equity.* (Doctoral Dissertation) Retrieved from ProQuest and Dissertations &

Theses.

Milner, H. R. & Lomotey, K. (2013). *The handbook of urban education*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Monroe, C.R. (2009). Teachers closing the discipline gap in the urban middle school. *Urban Education*, 44, 322-347.

Monroe, C. R. (2005). Understanding the Discipline Gap Through a Cultural Lens: Implications for the Education of African American Students. *Intercultural Education,* 16(4), 317-330.

Monroe, C. R. (2016). Race and color: Revisiting perspectives in Black education. *Theory into Practice*, 55(1), 46-53.

Morris, E. W. & Perry, B. L. (2016). The punishment gap: School suspension and racial disparities in achievement. *Social Problems,* 63(1), 68-86. doi:10.1093/socpro/spv026.

Morris, J.E. & Goldring, E. (1999). Are magnet schools more equitable? An analysis of the disciplinary rates of African American and White students Cincinnati magnet and non-magnet schools. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 32, 59-65.

National Association of Elementary School Principals. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.naesp.org/sites/default/files/Principal%20Wins%20in%20ECA.pdf

National Association of School Psychologists (2014). Racial and ethnic disproportionality in education. *Communiqué,* 42(5)*,* 24-26.

National Association of School Psychologists (2013). *Position statement on racial and ethnic disproportionality in education.* Retrieved from

http://www.nasponline.org/assets/documents/Research%20and%20Policy/Position%20Statements/Racial_Ethnic_Disproportionality.pdf

National Association of School Psychologists –NASP (2010). Preventing disproportionality: A framework for culturally responsive assessment. *NASP Communiqué,* 39(3), 22-27.

National Association of School Psychologists (2006). *Positive Behavioral Supports*. Retrieved from http://www.naspcenter.org/factsheets/pbs_fs.html.

National Association of Secondary School Principals (2004). Leadership. *Education Week.* Retrieved from http://www.edweek.org/ew/issues/leadership/

Neal, L. I., McCray, A.D., Webb-Johnson, G. & Bridgest, S. T. (2003). The effects of African American movement styles on teachers' perceptions and reactions. *Journal of Special Education,* 37, 49-57.

Noltemeyer, A., & Mcloughlin, C. S. (2010). Patterns of exclusionary discipline by school typology, ethnicity, and their interaction. *Penn GSE Perspectives on Urban Education,* 7(1), 27-40.

Okonofua, J. A., & Eberhardt, J. L. (2015). Two Strikes: Race and the Disciplining of Young Students. *Psychological Science (Sage Publications Inc.), 26*(5), 617-624. doi:10.1177/0956797615570365.

OSEP Technical Assistance Center on PBIS. (2015). Retrieved from https://www.pbis.org/presentations/chicago-forum-15

Peterson, D. S. (2013). Drafted! An urban principal's tale. *Educational Leadership,* 70(7), 74-77.

Raffaele M., & Knoff, H. M. (2003). Who gets suspended from school and why: A demographic analysis of schools and disciplinary infractions in a large school district. *Education & Treatment of Children*, 26, 30–51.

Rich, M. (2014). School data finds pattern of inequality along racial lines. New York Times. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/21/us/school-data-finds-pattern-of-inequality-along-racial-lines.html.

Richards, M. G., Aguilera, E., Murakami, E. T., & Weiland, C. A. (2014). Inclusive practices in large urban inner-city schools: School principal involvement in positive behavior invention programs. *National Forum of Educational Administration & Supervision Journal,* 32(1), 18-46.

Safe & Civil Schools. (2010). Retrieved from http://www.safeandcivilschools.com/services/classroom_management.php.

Safe & Civil Schools. (2011). Retrieved from http://www.safeandcivilschools.com/scs_efficacy/fort-bend-2011.php

Semi, M. (2006). Was the disparate impact theory a mistake? *UCLA Law Review,* 53(3), 701-782.

Shoben, E. W. (2004). Disparate impact theory in employment discrimination: What's Griggs still good for? What not? *Brandeis Law Journal*, 42(3), 597-622.

Skiba, R. J. (2013). Reaching a critical juncture for our kids: The need to reassess school-justice practices. *Family Court Review,* 51(3), 380-387. doi:10.1111/fcre.12034.

Skiba, R., Arrendondo, M. & Rausch, M. (2014). New and developing research on disparities in discipline. *Indiana University*. Bloomington, Indiana.

Skiba, R., Ekces, S. & Brown, K. (2010). African American disproportionality in school discipline: The divide between best evidence and legal remedy. *New York Law School Law Review*, 54(4), 1071-1112.

Skiba, R. J., Horner, R. H, Chung, C., Rausch, M. K., May, S. L., and Tobin, T. (2011). Race is not neutral: A national investigation of African American and Latino disproportionality in school Discipline. *School Psychology Review*, 2011, 40(1), 85–107.

Skiba, R. J., Michael, R.S., Nardo, A.C., & Peterson, R. (2002). The color of discipline: Sources of racial and gender disproportionality in school. *Urban Review,* 34(4), 317-342.

Skiba, R. J., & Peterson, R. (1999). Zero-tolerance: Can punishment lead to safe schools? *Phi Delta Kappan,* 80, 372-376.

Skiba, R. J., Simmons, A. B., Ritter, S., Gibbs, A. C., Rausch, M. K., Cuadrado, J., & Chung, C. (2008). Achieving equity in special education: History, status, and current challenges. *Exceptional Children,* 74, 264–288.

Skiba, R. & Williams, N. (2014). Are Black kids worse? Myths and facts about racial difference in behavior. *The Equity Project at Indiana University.* Bloomington, Indiana.

Skiba, R. J. , Chung, C., Trachok, M., Baker, T. L., Sheya, A., & Hughes, R. L. (2014). Parsing disciplinary disproportionality: Contributions of infraction, student, and

school Characteristics to out-of-school suspension and expulsion. *American Educational Research Journal,* 51(4), 640-670. doi:10.3102/0002831214541670.

Spiller, M. J., & Porter, J. (2014). Bringing an end to the school to prison pipeline in the age of "Post-Racialism". *Advances in Education in Diverse Communities: Research, Policy & Praxis,* 10, 71-90. doi:10.1108/S1479-358X20130000010004.

Sprick, R. (2009). CHAMPS: A proactive and positive approach to classroom management. Eugene, OR: Pacific Northwest Publishing.

Solomon, R. & Sekayi, D. (2007). *Urban teacher education and teaching: Innovative practices for diversity and social justice.* New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Sugai, G. Horner, R. H., Algozzine, R., Barrett, S., Lewis, T., Anderson, C., & Simonsen, B. (2010). *School-wide positive behavior support: Implementers' blueprint and self-assessment.* Eugene, OR: University of Oregon.

Stake, R. E. (2010). *Qualitative research: Studying how things work.* New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Sullivan, A. & A'Vant, E. (2009). Multicultural affairs on the need for cultural Responsiveness. NASP Communiqué, 38 (3) 8-9.

Terrell, R. D., & Lindsey, R. B. (2009). *Culturally proficient leadership: The personal journey begins within.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Texas Education Agency (2009). PEIMS Discipline Data. Retrieved from https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/cgi/sas/broker

Texas Education Agency (2010). PEIMS Discipline Data. Retrieved from https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/cgi/sas/broker

Texas Education Agency (2011). PEIMS Discipline Data. Retrieved from https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/cgi/sas/broker

Texas Education Agency (2012). PEIMS Discipline Data. Retrieved from https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/cgi/sas/broker

Texas Education Agency (2013). PEIMS discipline data. Retrieved from https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/cgi/sas/broker

Texas Education Agency (2014). PEIMS discipline data. Retrieved from https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/cgi/sas/broker

Texas Education Agency (2013). School report card 2012-2013 https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/src/2013/campus.srch.html

Texas Education Agency (2011). School report card 2012-2013 https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/src/2011/campus.srch.html

The Schott Foundation for Public Education (July 2012). Retrieved from www.blackboysreport.org.

Townsend, B. L. (2000). The disproportionate discipline of African American learners: reducing school suspensions and expulsions. *Exceptional Children, 66*(3), 381-391.

Townsend Walker, B. L. (2014). Suspended animation: A legal perspective of school discipline and African American learners in the shadows of Brown. *Journal of Negro Education,* 83(3), 338-351.

Townsend Walker, B. L. (2012). Teacher education and African American males: Deconstructing pathways from the schoolhouse to the "Big House". *Teacher Education & Special Education, 35*(4), 320-332. doi:10.1177/0888406412461158.

Transfield, D., Denyer, D. & Smart, P. (2003). Towards a methodology for developing evidence-informed management knowledge by means of systematic review. *British Journal of Management,* 14(3), pp. 207-222.

U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. (2011). School discipline and disparate impact. *Court Reporters and Transcribers.* Washington, D.C.

U.S. Congress. (2013). A general overview of disparate impact theory: Hearing before the subcommittee on oversight and investigations of the committee on financial services, U.S. House of Representatives, One Hundred thirteenth Congress, first session. Retrieved from https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-113hhrg86686/pdf/CHRG-113hhrg86686.pdf

U.S. Department of Education (2000). *Educational environments for students with disabilities.* Retrieved from http://www2.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/osep/2000/chapter-3.pdf.

U.S. Department of Education (2004). Building the Legacy: IDEA. Retrieved from

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (2015). *Protecting Civil Rights, advancing equity: Report to the President and Secretary of Education, under*

Section 203(b)(1) of the Department of Education Organization Act, FY 13–14, Washington, D.C., 2015.

U.S. Department of Education (2014). U.S. Departments of Education and Justice Release School Discipline Guidance Package to Enhance School Climate and Improve School Discipline Policies/Practices. Retrieved from https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/expansive-survey-americas-public-schools-reveals-troubling-racial-disparities

U.S. Department of Education (2016). 2013-14 Civil rights data collection: A first look https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/2013-14-first-look.pdf

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2015) Poverty Guidelines. Retrieved from http://aspe.hhs.gov/2015-poverty-guidelines.

Vera Institute of Justice. (2012). The price of prisons: Texas. What incarceration costs taxpayers. Retrieved from http://www.vera.org/files/price-of-prisons-texas-fact-sheet.pdf.

Vincent, C., Randall, C., Cartledge, G., Tobin, T. & Swain-Bradway, J. (2011). Toward a conceptual integration of cultural responsiveness and schoolwide positive behavior support. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions,*13(4), 219-229.

Wallace, J.,John M., Goodkind, S., Wallace, C. M., & Bachman, J. G. (2008). Racial, ethnic, and gender differences in school discipline among U.S. High School Students: 1991-2005. *Negro Educational Review,* 59(1), 47-62.

Watson, G. (2013). UIL releases conference cutoff numbers for 2014-16 realignment. *Lubbock Avalanche Journal.* Retrieved from www.lubbockonline.com.

Welch, K., & Payne, A. A. (2010). Racial threat and punitive school discipline. *Social Problems,* 57(1), 25-48.

Wright, J. P., Morgan, M. A., Coyne, M. A., Beaver, K. M., & Barnes, J. C. (2014). Prior problem behavior accounts for the racial gap in school suspensions. *Journal of Criminal Justice,* 42(3), 257-266. doi:10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2014.01.001.